

MERCY AND JUDGMENT.

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A DISCOURSE,

CONTAINING

SOME FRAGMENTS OF THE HISTORY

OF THE

BAPTIST CHURCH IN CHARLESTON, S. C.

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DELIVERED

BY REQUEST OF THE CORPORATION OF SAID CHURCH,  
SEPTEMBER 23d AND 30th, A. D. 1832.

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BY BASIL MANLY, PASTOR.

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1837.

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PRESS OF KNOWLES, VOSE AND CO.

# DISCOURSE.

## PART I.

### PSALM CL., 1.

“I WILL SING OF MERCY, AND JUDGMENT: UNTO THEE,  
O LORD, WILL I SING.”

This Psalm is thought to have been occasioned by the restoration of the Ark of God to its place, after it had been in possession of the enemies of Israel. Seven months had it remained in the hands of the Philistines. At length, wearied and broken by calamities inflicted in consequence of their unhallowed detention of that strange captive, they made arrangements for its return. 1. Sam. 6, 7. In pursuance of these arrangements, it was left at Kirjath-jearim. Thither, to the house of Abinadab, after the lapse of twenty years, David goes to bring it up to Jerusalem; but Uzzah, one of the attendants, perceiving it to be shaken in the cart whereon it had been placed, incautiously took hold of it, at Nachon's threshing floor; and for his presumption was smitten. This so disconcerted David, who had not observed the appointed method, in attempting its removal, that in a sudden fit of trepidation and displeasure, he desisted from his design, branded the place of that breach with the name of *Perez-Uzzah*, and hastened the Ark aside into the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite. 2 Sam. 6, 1, &c.

When three months had elapsed, he was told the Lord had blessed the house of Obed-edom, on account of his

entertainment of the Ark; and David again goes, with great pomp and gladness, to bring it to Zion : which, by pursuing the appointed method, he was able duly to accomplish.

On this occasion, reflecting on the varied incidents of Israelitish history, recent and remote, with which this Ark was connected, the thoughts of *mercy* and *judgment* filled his mind. His own recent elevation to the throne of all Israel, and the necessity he felt of endeavoring to govern in the fear of God, made these thoughts peculiarly impressive at that time. Wherefore, in this Psalm, he expresses his purpose with regard to some very important principles of government, prefacing it with a song. "I will sing of mercy, and judgment: Unto thee, O Lord, will I sing."

We may observe,

1. The resolution of the Psalmist—"I will sing."—Music seems to be a natural language, adapted to the expression of what is joyous or mournful; and the first rude notions of it are probably coeval with the use of speech. As it is originally the fruit of emotion, so it is fitted to excite and sustain it; and on this account probably, more than any other, music has ever been employed in the worship of God. In the figurative use of the term, here as usual, to sing expresses the act of thanksgiving. Ps. 71. 22, 23. The Psalmist resolves to employ his highest powers in an act of grateful recollection and praise.

And this, at all times, will appear to be our duty, both from reason and from scripture: even judgments themselves calling for "*Songs* in the night."

2. The subject of his song. "Mercy and judgment." Mercy is his benevolence to sinners;—judgment relates to his character as a Sovereign or Judge, and is applied generally to those acts of God which are mysterious and afflictive.

If we sing altogether of *mercy*, we may be wanting in

reverence and godly fear. If we sing only of judgment, we may be deficient in gratitude. Mercy and judgment, either mingled or alternate, make up the history of our lives,—fill the records of churches and of States; and both, therefore, should have an appropriate part in all our celebrations.

3. The Auditor of the Song. “Unto thee, O Lord, will I sing?” This implies,

That it is best to express, in words, all our devotions; not only such as are of a public nature, that they may edify others; but even our most private meditations, that *our thoughts may be definite, our attention may be fixed, our feelings engaged.*

That all acts of worship, public or private, should be done as to the Lord; that our minds should be so riveted on him, as present with us, and the object of our worship, that we should comparatively, and for the time, disregard all surrounding objects, and be singly occupied with the design of pleasing the ear of Jehovah;—“Sing-  
ing and making melody in our heart to the Lord.”

Ah brethren! our attention will be fixed, at least *one day.*

4. His object—that he might prepare and stimulate himself for the execution of his high trust, as well as express the overflowing feelings of his heart.

From all which it would appear that the following sentiment is breathed in the text, viz: *That the grateful record of divine dispensations is a great help to duty.*

*It furnishes direction.* In receiving the discipline of our Heavenly Father, we discern his *character* as a sovereign and a friend; and we become acquainted with the *steady purposes* of Him, who, without variableness or shadow of turning, pursues his ends; and in his dealings with his people, remembers the years of ancient times, and the long established usages of his throne. Ps. 119, 132. Thus shall we be able to adjust our course to the methods of his mercy and judgment: while these very attri-

butes of our great Exemplar, copied out into our lives in the form of benevolence and faithfulness, will fulfil the second table of the Law.

It *imposes restraints*, as it serves to promote caution, humility, and dependence upon God.

It *supplies a most powerful motive*, as it is the grand source of gratitude.

It *promotes perseverance*, by animating us with confidence and courage.

And it reveals, in broad and living characters, the fact, that all desirable success and enjoyment are entirely dependent on God's delight in his people, and his blessing upon them ; and thus are we encouraged, in every enterprise, to *throw ourselves simply on "the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush ; in whose favour is life, and whose loving kindness is better than life."*

These reflections are not an unsuitable comment on the occasion, *the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of our Church ; and may introduce a sketch of its history.*

It is to be regretted, however, that the Church has no records to direct our enquiries ; a series of calamities having deprived them of nearly every vestige of their own progress, which could be considered as properly their own, until within the last twelve years. In the year 1752, September 15, occurred the dreadful hurricane and inundation with which Charleston was visited. Among other and great injury sustained in all parts of the city, the south west corner of the Baptist Meeting House, was carried away by a vessel of nine or ten feet draft, which had been driven from her anchors through the mouth of Vanderhorst's Creek ; and all the books and papers perished in the flood. The vessel afterwards grounded on the west side of Meeting street. About thirty years after, viz : on January 3, 1782, the British troops visited St. Thomas's Parish, and from the dwelling of Col. Thomas Screven, then the acting Trustee of the Church, they

took, and either carried off or destroyed, "the old book kept by the Trustees of said Church, and also all the indentments, acts, papers, &c. of the church."

The records and papers which had accumulated after that period were again destroyed, in the conflagration which consumed, among others, the house of Mr. Robert Brodie, the Church Clerk, in the year 1819. Thus the water, the fire, and the hand of the enemy, each in its turn, have deprived the Church of the means of relating its own history. Some printed documents, however, remain, and some papers preserved among the Screven family, and handed over to Deacon William Inglesby, who was allied to the family by marriage. We have also a curious manuscript volume, (in Roman Character) of the Rev. Mr. Morgan Edwards, A. M., containing "materials towards a history of the Baptists in the provinces of Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina," collected by him, during a pedestrian journey, in 1772. With the aid of these sources of information, we venture to present you with the following imperfect sketch of the History of the oldest Baptist Church in South Carolina.

The Baptist Church in Charleston, S. C., owes its origin to some of those mysterious, but wise dispensations of Providence, in which mercy and judgment are blended.

In the year 1655, according to Ivimey's history of the English Baptists, under the head of Somersetshire, the Rev. Mr. Henry Jessey, Baptist Minister of London, was invited by his brethren in Bristol, to assist them in regulating their congregations. The principles of dissent and of believers' baptism, which had been first avowed there about fifteen years before, had now spread into many adjacent parts;—and the congregation at Wells, Cirencester, *Somerton*, Chard, Taunton, Honiton, Exeter, Dartmouth, Plymouth, Lyme, Weymouth, and Dorchester, were all visited during this journey by Mr. Jessey, undertaken at the request above named, and all shared in the benefits of

this pastoral visitation. In the following year, 1656, these churches published "A confession of the faith of several churches in the county of Somerset, and in the counties near adjacent," subscribed by twenty-five persons, ministers and lay-men, in behalf of the whole. Among these names is that of *William Screven*, of *Somerton*. This is the individual, as is with great probability supposed, who afterwards became the honored founder of this church. Driven by persecution, or impelled by those motives which lead good men to emigrate, he left his native land for America; but at what period he arrived, or where he first settled, does not appear. In 1681, however, we find him settled at Kittery, a place on the Piscataqua river, county of York, and province of Maine,—and employed in holding religious meetings in his own house. He himself had entered into particular membership with the first Baptist Church in Boston, Mass. on the 21st of June, 1681; and several of his neighbors, through the good hand of his God upon him, being brought to the knowledge of the truth, joined the same church in that year. The opening prospect now invited these Christians at Kittery to more regular and systematic efforts for the promotion of their Master's cause. Wherefore, very early in the next year, they sent their most gifted brother to the mother church in Boston, with a letter of recommendation and request; which procured for him a license to preach. This instrument bears date January 11th, 1682, and is in the following words:

"To all whom it may concern: These are to certify, that our beloved brother, William Screven, is a member in communion with us; and having had trial of his gifts among us, and finding him to be a man whom God hath qualified and furnished with the gifts of his Holy Spirit and Grace, enabling him to open and apply the word of God, which through the blessing of the Lord Jesus may



be useful in his hand, for the begetting and building up of souls in the knowledge of God. We do, therefore, appoint, approve and encourage him to exercise his gift, in the place where he lives, or elsewhere, as the Providence of God may cast him : and so the Lord help him to eye his glory in all things, and to walk humbly in the fear of his name.

Signed by us in behalf of the rest,  
ISAAC HULL,  
JOHN FARNUM."

This step roused the same spirit of persecution at Kittery, under which the Baptists about Boston had already suffered severely. By the procurement of Mr. Woodbridge, the minister, and Huckle, the magistrate, the people who attended Mr. Screven's meetings were summoned to answer for their conduct, and threatened with a fine of five shillings, should they repeat their offence. Mr. Screven himself, continuing to preach Christ to all who came, was apprehended and taken before the General Court ; on whose records is found the following entry :

" *William Screven*, appearing before this Court, and being convicted of the contempt of his Majesty's authority, and refusing to submit himself to the sentence of the Court prohibiting his public preaching, and upon examination before the Court, declaring his resolution still to persist therein, the Court tendered him liberty to return home to his family, in case he would forbear such turbulent practices and amend for the future ; but he refusing, the Court sentenced him to give bond for his good behavior, and to forbear such contentious behavior for the future, and the delinquent to stand committed until the judgment of this Court be fulfilled.

A true copy, transcribed, and with the records compared, this 17th of August, 1682.

Per EDWARD RISHWORTH, Recorder."

To this is added a copy, of the same date, by the same hand, of an act of their executive Court, which says, "This Court, having considered the offensive speeches of William Screven, viz., his rash and inconsiderate words tending to blasphemy, do adjudge the delinquent, for his offence, to pay ten pounds into the treasury of the county or province. And further, the Court doth forbid and discharge the said Screven, under any pretence, to keep any private exercise at his own house or elsewhere, upon the Lord's Days, either in Kittery or any other place within the limits of this province, and is for the future enjoined to observe the public worship of God in our public assemblies upon the Lord's Days, according to the laws here established in this province, upon such penalties as the law requires, upon such neglect of the premises."—*See Backus's History*, pp. 502—505.

Mr. Backus adds, that "he was so far from yielding to such sentences, that on September 13, he with the rest sent a request to Boston that Elder Hull and others might visit and form them into a church, which was granted; so that a covenant was solemnly signed on September 25, 1682, by William Screven, Elder; Humphrey Churchwood, Deacon; Robert Williams, John Morgandy, Richard Cutt, Timothy Davis, Leonard Drowne, William Adams, Humphrey Azell, George Litten, and a number of sisters." *See Backus*, p. 505.

This little church, thus begun, was able to maintain its ground but a short time. They were persecuted in such a manner that they were obliged to flee to some more favored parts of the country. Whereupon, William Screven and 'his Baptist Company'\* removed to Carolina; and settled on the Cooper river, not far from the present site

\* The original minute book of the Charleston Association, now in possession of the Pastor of this church, contains a historical sketch of the church inserted by order in 1752. In this it is particularly said that most of the members came with William Screven from Piscataqua.

of the city of Charleston, and called their settlement *Somerton*. This, it is probable, took place in the same year of their constitution, and toward its close; the vigorous and summary methods of persecution adopted against them not allowing a longer respite.

To the constitution, and subscription of a covenant above mentioned at Kittery, September 25, 1682, the Baptist church in Charleston traces its own origin;—and from all the means of information now accessible, it is most probably concluded that their settlement about Charleston was only a transfer of the seat of worship of the persecuted flock (or a majority of it) which had been gathered on the Piscataqua.

We, who live in these times of universal toleration, are astonished that men, professing godliness, should have been guilty of such absurd, cruel, and unchristian proceedings. But we are not to suppose that therefore they were all bad men. This part of their conduct surely was an error. But their error was that of the times in which they lived, and “the severities they practised were not so much the result of disposition, as of the principles they had adopted.” Although they had fled from the old world to enjoy liberty of conscience in the new, it was not against spiritual tyranny, in itself, they objected, but against its bearing upon themselves. They still cherished a notion of the right of the civil magistrate to interfere in religious concerns, and labored as much to secure uniformity in the modes of worship in the new world, as their oppressors had done in the old. Happy are we who live at a period when the principles of civil and religious liberty are better understood.

About the time of William Screven’s arrival in Carolina, (viz. 1682, or beginning of 1683,) there came over from the west of England a number of ‘substantial persons,’ as they are called by Hewit, (see his *History of South Carolina and Georgia*,) in company with Joseph

Blake, the friend and trustee of Lord Berkeley, one of the Lords Proprietors. The Lady Blake, and her mother, Lady Axtell, were a part of this accession to the strength of the infant church; and Mr. Blake himself, if not a communicant, at least entertained the sentiments of the Baptists, and favored their cause.—*Hewit, vol. 1, p. 140.*

He, together with Paul Grimball, also a Baptist, and five other persons, was a member of the committee for revising 'The Fundamental Constitutions,' prepared for the Lords Proprietors by the celebrated John Locke; and he succeeded Governor Archdale in the government of the Colony, in the close of the year 1696. He died, September 7, 1700, a wise, persevering, and distinguished magistrate. Lady Axtell, whose plantation was in Colleton county, was a benefactress of the church, and gave the glass chandelier which hangs in the old Baptist Church, now the place of worship for seamen.\* Mrs. Blake, besides contributing to aid her own denomination, gave largely to adorn the first St. Philip's Church.

Not long after this period, Lord Cardross, a Nobleman from the north of England, came over to Carolina, bringing with him a colony of North-Britons, who were chiefly Baptists, and settled at Port-Royal Island. But the neighboring Indians, and more particularly the Spanish settlement at St. Augustine, proving hostile, soon obliged them to remove their residence to a place more secure; and before 1686, we find them settled at the mouth of the Edisto River. (*Hewit, vol. 1, 89.* See also appen-

\* Among the families then united under the pastoral care of Mr. Screven, Morgan Edwards has enumerated the respectable names of Atwell, Bullein, Elliott, Raven, Baker, Barker, Blake, Child, Cater, Whitaker, Bryant, Butler, Chapman, &c. To which, we may add that of Morton. Joseph Morton, son of Gov. Morton and of the sister of Gov. Blake, signalled himself in 1703, in the upper house of Assembly, as the friend of religious liberty, by voting against the establishment of the Church of England, as the religion of the State; but he was refused permission to enter his protest on the journals of the house. *Hewit, vol. 1. p. 166.*

dix to Gov. Archdale's description of the Colony, page 4.) The Baptist part of this company, among whose names Morgan Edwards has preserved those of William Frie,\* Thomas Grimball, Providence Grimball, Ephraim Mikell, Joseph Sealy, Joseph Parmenter, Isaac Parmenter, Thomas Parmenter, and William Tilly, attached themselves to Mr. Screven's Church, still worshipping at Somerton. And thus, by the special interposition of Divine Providence, had Mr. Screven the satisfaction of finding himself suddenly surrounded in the land of his banishment, by a large number of pious, intelligent christians, of kindred sentiments and feelings, and by a still greater number of influential adherents and friends.

In the course of a few years, the neck of land between Ashley and Cooper Rivers, which had begun to be settled about ten years before Mr. Screven's arrival, had attracted a considerable part of the Colonists to it, on account of its facilities for commerce ; and while a part of the Church at Somerton, pushed their settlements out into St. John's Parish, on the western branch of Cooper River, (so speaks Humphreys in his Historical account of the Society for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, page 88,) and remained there, "very pious and devout," even as late as 1707, and perhaps later, the far greater portion of the members had removed to the neck, before the year 1693; which made it expedient for them to transfer thither also the ordinary seat of their public worship. Whether they left a house of worship at Somerton, we cannot now ascertain ; indeed it is impossible even to identify the spot. But "after their removal to *Charlestown*,† they held their worship at the house of one William Chapman, in King

\* This William Frie, was a minister, and preached on Edisto Island.. But what was his character, and when he died, does not appear.

† The neck of land, formed by the confluence of the Cooper and Ashley Rivers, was at first called Oyster Point. In 1677, the settlement beginning to increase and a town to be formed, it was called *Oyster-*

street, until they built" a place of worship for themselves. Thus they continued until 1699; when by the gift of William Elliott, one of the members, the Church was put in possession of a lot, in Church street, (No. 62, in the model of the Town, recorded in the Surveyor General's office,) which is the same on which our house of worship now stands.\* They began to build soon after, and must have completed the building in that and the following year; since there is on record a deed for a lot "bounded north on the Baptist Meeting House," which bears date, January 20, 1701.

The population of the place was now reckoned at five to six thousand. There was one Clergyman of the Church of England,† and one of the Establishment of Scotland.‡

*Point-Town.* In 1680, in some official papers, the place was called *New Charles-Town*, in 1682 *Charles-Town*; and so it continued to be written and called until 1783; when it was incorporated by the name of the city of Charleston. Dr. Dalcho's Church History.

\* This lot belonged originally to Josiah Willis, mariner. Mr. Elliott bought it of Elizabeth Willis, the only daughter and heiress of Josiah Willis, for twenty pounds. The deed bears date July 18, 1699. The Trustees to whom it was conveyed for the Church, were William Sadler, John Raven, Thomas Bullein, Thomas Graves, and John Elliot; and the witnesses to the Instrument are John Collins, William Possell, Thomas Heyward, James Dickason, Jonathan Armory, and John Story. The Church are styled in the deed; "The people of the Church of Christ, baptized on profession of their faith, meeting in Charlestown, distinguished from all other Churches, by the name of Antipædo Baptists." The lot was 100 feet wide, and 250 feet deep; and was designed for the seat of a parsonage house, as well as of a church.

† There is no mention of an Episcopal Clergyman in Charlestown, before 1680. And it is uncertain whether any body of communicants had been collected in the capacity of a Church, until after the first St. Philip's Church was finished in 1681 or 2. Dalcho's Ch. His. pp. 26, 32.

‡ Hewit mentions no more than these. Dr. Dalcho states, (note on pages 27, 28) that "the Independent or Congregational Church, was built about 1690. The Calvinistic Church of French Protestants, was built before 1693; and the Quaker Meeting House about 1696. Gov. Archdale, a Quaker, promoted the building."

No sooner were the Baptists settled in their new place of worship, than they began to seek after their spiritual establishment on the foundation of the doctrines of grace. Simultaneously with the erection of the building, they sent to England for copies of "A confession of the faith of more than a *hundred* congregations of Christians, baptized upon profession of their faith, in London and the country, in 1689;" called the *Century Confession*." This they carefully examined, and adopted verbatim, in the year 1700, as the confession of this Church; and so it has remained to this day.

But while they were thus careful to secure among them *soundness in the faith*, they were no less "careful to maintain good works." Animated with the spirit and guided by the example of Mr. Screven, who at the age of more than "three score years and ten," was still the laborious missionary, they procured ministers, and some among themselves who had the gift of exhortation, aided in the work, to go into the surrounding settlements, and preach the everlasting Gospel. So early and abundant were they in this species of labor, that with all the commendable zeal of the society in England, for propagating the gospel in foreign parts, it is acknowledged by their historians, that in most places which their missionaries visited in this neighborhood, they found themselves preceded by the Baptists. *See Humphreys*, pp. 88, 95, 108, &c.

The vigor and health of Mr. Screven, which had sustained him amid the labors and trials of a well spent life, now began sensibly to decline. And as the situation of the Church was such as not only enabled them decently to support a minister, but required more active service than he supposed himself capable of bestowing, he made arrangements for retiring from the pastoral office. With the affection of a father for his beloved flock, he wrote a treatise containing his latest counsels, entitled "*An Ornament for Church Members, &c.*," which he left with

them in manuscript; and which the Church published after his death. It is much to be regretted that not a copy of this, so far as I can learn, seems now to be extant. Morgan Edwards, observing that the style of the whole was good, has preserved a part of the closing paragraph, as follows: "And now, for a close of all, my dear brethren and sisters, (whom God hath made me, poor unworthy me, an instrument of gathering and settling in the faith and order of the Gospel,) my request is that you, as speedily as possible, supply yourselves with an able and faithful minister. Be sure you take care that the person be orthodox in the faith, and of blameless life, and does own the confession put forth by our brethren in London, in 1689, &c."

"Had they attended to this counsel," observes Morgan Edwards, "the distractions, and almost destruction of the Church, which happened twenty-six years after, would have been prevented."—This written counsel, Mr. Screven supposed, might be his last public service of the Church he had gathered;—and accordingly he retired in 1706.

But the old age and retirement of this venerable saint was not to be spent in indolence and ease. He looked for that "rest" only "that is to come." Instead of remaining in Charlestown, where he might have enjoyed a competency, and the society of his numerous family and friends, he removed his residence to the head of Winyaw Bay, purchased and settled the lands on which Georgetown is now built, and commenced proclaiming to the destitute around him, as his health allowed, the message of salvation. Meanwhile, the church had obtained a minister from England, whose name, it would appear, was *White*; but of whom we know but little, except that he seems to have been high in Mr. Screven's esteem.—But it pleased Divine Providence, in his inscrutable wisdom, that Mr. White should be early removed by death.



In consequence of the destitution occasioned by this unexpected event, the church were now again dependent for a season on the labors of their former venerated Pastor : and Mr. Screven seems to have met the occasion with a spirit becoming "the man of God." With him, the choice did not lie between labor and repose, but between the different fields of action which might invite his toil. The circumstances in which he was now placed seemed to be embarrassing. Not only had he to choose between leaving his family and his incipient settlement at Georgetown,\* and suffering the Charleston church to remain without the ordinances ; but an urgent call from another and a very imposing quarter, now reached him. The First Baptist Church in Boston, of which Mr. Screven had been a member, had suffered several years' destitution, since the death of their Pastor, Elder John Emblen ; at length, unable to procure a Pastor in this country, they wrote to England for help. To this letter, an answer, signed by nine ministers, and dated 'London, March 17, 1706,' was returned, expressing regret that they "cannot think of a Minister, who is at liberty, proper for" them. The Boston Church then lifted an imploring cry to Mr. Screven to come to their relief ; and he was at first "inclined" to go. But while weighing the subject, the unexpected death of Mr. White in Charlestown seems to have decided him, and accordingly he wrote to Boston, "Our Minister, that came from England, is dead, and I can by no means be spared. I must say, 'tis a great loss, and to me a great disappointment ; but the will of the Lord is done, and in his will I must be satisfied. I pray the Lord to sanctify all his dispensations, especially such awful ones as this is to us, and to me especially. I do not now see how I can be helpful to you, otherwise than in my prayers to God

\* It seems to have been called at first by Mr. Screven, *Jameston*. See his letters at the end.

for you, or in writing to you. The Lord help us to pity one another in our affliction; as the Gospel counselleth, if one member be afflicted, all mourn.”\*

It is not thought that Mr. Screven removed his family again to Charleston, but that he ministered to the church occasionally, as he was able, until his death. A flourishing church of about ninety communicants was now before him, waiting to be enlightened by the last rays of his setting sun—a scene this which enkindled afresh the energies of his soul. But though, like the sun, he had come forth from his chambers, rejoicing as a strong man to run his race, it pleased God that the remainder of his race should be short. On the 10th day of October, A. D. 1713, at Georgetown, having completed his eighty-fourth year, he was called to rest from his labors. He came down ‘to his grave in a good old age, like as a shock of corn, fully ripe, cometh in, in his season.’ Thus died William Screven, a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ; pure in morals, sound in doctrine, abundant in labors—tender and affectionate to all, but especially to the church of Christ—honored and revered by all who knew him—and, whether in persecution or success, “showing, out of a good conversation, his works, with the meekness of wisdom.”

His tomb is still to be seen, though in a dilapidated state, in a lot, on Screven-street, Georgetown, now the residence of *Robert Heriot, Esquire*.

After the death of Mr. Screven, the church was served by a Mr. Sanford. But whence, or at what time he came, or what was his character, we are unable now to ascertain. He died about 1718.†

\* See his letters to Mr. Ellis Callender, at the end.

† The brief history of the church, recorded in 1752 in the old minute book of the Charleston Association, states that none of the ministers who served the church from the death of Mr. Screven until the settlement of Mr. Peartt, were properly its Pastors.

In the year 1717, Rev. Mr. William Peartt came to Charleston, and, on the death of Mr. Sanford, became Pastor of the church. We know but little of him, save that he seems to have been a man of respectable standing in society. After the death of Paul Grimball, who had been Secretary to the Province, and a member of Gov. Archdale's council, Mr. Peartt married his widow, who survived him also—"married a Mr. Smith, and under that name, gave a legacy of £1540 to the Baptist church of Philadelphia." Mr. Peartt died about 1728.

The Baptists and their descendants who had settled on Edisto, still members of the Charleston church, had become considerably increased through the labors of Mr. Frie, Mr. Screven and his successors; and before 1722, had joined with other inhabitants of the island in building a meeting house for their common use. About the same time, or a little before, Mr. William Tilly, one of the brethren, a native of Salisbury, England, appearing to be endowed with appropriate gifts and graces, was called to the ministry by the Charleston church; and, after a suitable probation, was ordained in Charleston. His residence being on Edisto, his labors were chiefly bestowed there, and much to the edification of Christians. But in 1722, the Baptists were ejected\* from the common meeting house, to which Rev. Mr. Stobo and those who acted with him laid exclusive claim. They were therefore compelled to worship in private houses until 1726, when they built a meeting house for themselves, (it was standing in 1772,) on a lot of two acres, the gift of Mr. Ephraim Mikell; who was one of the members, and a pious, excellent man. The members there, who were then a considerable number, (Humphreys, page 108,) soon set about providing permanently for the support of Baptist preaching on the island. They purchased of Matthew Crees a

\* See Morgan Edwards, page 27, &c.

tract of land for a glebe, adjoining the two acres given by Mr. Mikell, for the sum of £340; (the trustees then being Charles Odingsell, Joseph Sealy, sen., Ephraim Mikell, Paul Grimbball, Joseph Sealy, jun., John Wells, William Elliott, sen., John Sheppard, Samuel Screven; to hold the property for the support of an Anti-pædobaptist minister *on that island forever*.)

Mr. Joseph Sealy also gave a fund of £1000 for the same object. But many of the members soon moved away; some to Port-Royal Island and some to Euhaw. Those on Port-Royal soon joined their brethren at Euhaw, where they maintained worship as well as they could; and, after the death of Mr. Tilly, the survivors on Edisto removed also to Euhaw, and left the Baptist name almost extinct on Edisto Island, for more than half a century.

Previous to the death of Mr. Peartt, viz. in 1727, a number of the members residing on Ashley river a few miles above the city, erected a meeting house, with the aid of their brethren; in which, worship was occasionally held, and which, in time, became the seat of a separate church. Another body of members residing on Stono, built also a house of worship on that river, sixteen miles from town, about the same time, (1728;) and in common with that at Ashley river, this place received the occasional labors of the Pastor, and such other ministers as were transiently in Charleston. This meeting house on Stono became afterwards memorable in the history of the church, as the first seat of worship of a body of members who formed a schism and separated from them. Both these houses were erected in quite a respectable style, and had lots of convenient size around them; that at Ashley river\* had a lot of seven acres, and that at Stono, of four.

Although the church, while it was thus extending it-

\* The building was consumed by fire in 1762, but was rebuilt of brick the year following, 43 feet by 28.

self, suffered a great bereavement in the death of its Pastor, it was presently supplied by the arrival of the Rev. Thomas Simmons. This gentleman, a native of England, had had his mind directed toward the ministry in early life. His father, not being aware of the son's desire, or not approving it, after giving him an academical education, bound him to the carpenter's business. "But the son liked it not, and therefore came to America, to follow his inclination." He first landed in Pennsylvania, was there received by the brethren, and ordained to the work of the ministry. He arrived in Charleston in 1728, the year in which Mr. Peartt died, and soon took the pastoral care of the church.

Among the members, at this period, were several persons of education and influence. But these qualities, though so eminently serviceable to the cause of truth and piety, when under the sanctifying influence of the grace of God, often prove, through the infirmity or perverseness of the human mind, the fruitful source of heresy and schism.

So it proved in this instance. William Elliott, jun., son of the donor of the lot before mentioned, had now become a member of the church, and possessed considerable influence. Adopting the distinguishing sentiments of the sect of Arians,\* he became the leader of a party, and drew off his father, and several of the more wealthy members with him. These, assuming the name of General Baptists, while the church were thereafter distinguished by the name of Particular Baptists, separated themselves from the mother church in 1733, sent to England for a minister of kindred sentiments, and obtained the Rev. Mr. Robert Ingram; and were constituted into a church, with the number of thirteen male and eight

\* For proof of this, see a catechism published in 1749, and dedicated to four ladies, all of the Elliott family, by the Rev. Mr. Henry Heywood.

female members, at the meeting house at Stono before mentioned, November 25, 1736.\*

This body were not entirely agreed on doctrinal points; some divisions of sentiment (so says Alexander Fraser in a certificate made before William Scott, jun. J. P., March 1, 1787) distracted their counsels and measures, during the ministry of their first Pastor. But Mr. Ingram died soon after; and the next minister they obtained, Mr. Henry Heywood, being a man of education and talents, very probably soon composed their lesser differences; as we hear no more of them after this period. Mr. Heywood was succeeded by a Mr. Wheeler.

This party, after the lapse of about fifty years from their secession, became entirely extinct. While this party was organizing itself, the members residing on Ashley River, received an invaluable accession to their number in the Rev. Isaac Chanler. This gentleman, born in Bristol, England, May 10, 1700, came to Carolina about 1733; and bestowed his labors principally among the Christians on Ashley River. He was so blessed to the conversion of souls, that it was soon judged expedient to have a separate Church constituted at the place where he preached. Accordingly, May 24, 1736, twenty-eight persons, male and female,† united together in solemn covenant as a Church, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Isaac Chanler, at the meeting house which had been built by common exertion, nine years before. This Church existed, under

\* See a printed statement of facts, drawn up by the Rev. Dr. Richard Furman in 1797, and presented to the City Council.

† The names of the persons who became members of the Ashley River Church, beside Mr. Chanler, the Pastor, were, William Cater, Charles Barker, John Bullein, Richard Bedon, Jun., Benjamin Child, John Sheppard, Jun., Francis Sheppard, Alexander Sheppard, Charles Filbin, Jacob Bradwell, John Angel, Thomas Ramsay, Richard Bedon, Sen. And Sarah Baker, Mary Cater, Susanna Bradwell, Christiana Brown, Ann Maam, Elizabeth Chanler, Elizabeth Bullein, Elizabeth Bedon, Joyce Griffin, Elizabeth Salter, Susanna Baker, Elizabeth Marion, Mary Sheppard, and Ann Peacock.

the ministry of Mr. Chanler, his successors Mr. John Stephens, and others, until the Revolution; when, becoming extinct, all its temporalities, and even its plate, were seized upon by an *individual*, and made *private property*.

The Church in Charleston, diminished in numbers, and reduced in strength by these almost simultaneous movements, was now destined to undergo a series of the severest trials. The Rev. Mr. Tilly, the wise and faithful minister at Edisto Island, to whom, in his growing usefulness, the Church might look on any emergency, was now to be removed; and on April 14th, 1744, in the forty-sixth year of his age, he died. How great a loss the cause sustained in the death of this saint, we may judge from the following remarks of the Rev. Isaac Chanler, in a sermon preached at Edisto, on occasion of his death. "A minister he was, able and faithful to declare unto you the whole counsel of God. Some of you were eye and ear witnesses of his steadfast faith and hope on his death bed. With what composedness of mind, and solid satisfaction received he the awful summons! How free from all slavish fear of the King of Terrors! How affectionately recommended he you to the blessing and protection of God! And with what cheerful resignation gave he up his spirit to the hands of a dear Redeemer! He lived and died in the Lord." The death of such a man would have been a calamity to the church at any time; but more especially was it so now, when their proper Pastor, Mr. Simmons, though generally esteemed a good man, had surrendered his judgment and feelings too much to the influence of others. This defect in his character, had well nigh occasioned the destruction of the Church. In 1744, Dr. Thomas Dale, son-in-law of Mr. Simmons, but a particular friend of Mr. Heywood, the minister of the Arian party, caused a misunderstanding and dispute between his father in law and the Church.

Mr. Simmons was suspended from his pastoral office, by a majority of the Church. But Mr. Francis Gracia, a Deacon, and a few others, forcibly took possession of the place of worship, and introduced him again to the pulpit. The right of property and possession being now disputed, it was found that all the original Trustees to whom the property had been conveyed for the use of the Congregation were dead, and had not conveyed the trust to others : wherefore, the Church sent a petition to the Provincial Legislature, signed by seventeen persons, praying them to revive the trust in their right and behalf. Aware that some efforts might be made to thwart their design, they requested Mr. Baker and Mr. Bullein, two of their members, to wait on the Legislature with their petition ; furnishing them with abundant documentary evidence, to prove that they held the original Calvinistic sentiments of the Church ; that the donor of the lot himself, Mr. Elliot, was a Calvinist at the time of the gift, and for many years after ; and that in what they had done with respect to Mr. Simmons and his party, they had acted only in accordance with the known usage of the Church, and of Baptist Churches in general.

Meanwhile, a counter petition was circulated among the minority, and signed by them, praying the Legislature not to suffer the Church, whom they style a party, to deprive Mr. Simmons of his pastoral office and living ; and the deposed minister himself, with William Elliot, Jun., the leader of the Arian party, waited in person on the Legislature to urge their point. The Legislature heard the petitions, and revived the trust. But the General Baptists had the address and influence, not only to have some of their own party nominated as Trustees, but to have a clause inserted in the act, by which they were invested with equal rights in the property.

The Trustees were, William Screven, of James Island ; John Raven, a minor, (and till he comes of age, Bransell



Evance, his guardian to act for him,) Elisha Butler, William Butler, Francis Gracia, John Ladson, of John's Island, and Paul Grimbail.

As the act is a singular one, it may be worth while to record the particular clause referred to. The act is dated "Council Chamber, May 25, 1745," and is signed by James Glen, Governor, and William Bull, Jun., Speaker. The clause runs as follows: "And forasmuch as it appears by the above recited indenture, that the said Town lot, numbered sixty-two, and appertenances, was given to the use of the Anti-pædobaptists\* in general, and for the preventing of any disputes that may hereafter arise, it is hereby further enacted and declared by the authority aforesaid, that all the Anti-pædobaptists, as well those distinguished by the name of General Baptists, as those distinguished by the name of Particular Baptists, are entitled to, and shall have an equal right in the said lot numbered sixty-two, and the appertenances. And each of the said sects shall and lawfully may make use of the same for divine service; any law, usage, or custom to the contrary, in any wise, notwithstanding."

Thus, (beside the meeting house on Stono, which the church had suffered the General Baptists to retain,) were they now put in possession of half the property in town, to which it does not appear that they had laid any previous claim. Mr. Heywood was immediately introduced into the pulpit in town, and his popular talents drew around him, for a time, a large congregation. "But his doctrines soon disgusted the people, and but few came."

Meanwhile the sorrowful church, appointing June 24th, 1745, as a day of fasting and prayer, came together to

\* The reasons why the Baptist Church in Charleston was known by the name of *Anti-pædobaptists* only in 1699, is very obvious: there being at the time no other sect of Baptists in the State, and this denomination being sufficient to distinguish them from all other Christians in it."—Dr. R. Furman's statement.

consider what should be done: and, on the day above named, entered into a solemn covenant anew with each other, and formed a new constitution for themselves.—These instruments were probably the same which they originally adopted, with such modifications as their recent experience suggested. Far from being discouraged at what had occurred, they made immediate arrangements to provide themselves with a place of worship.

The following persons were appointed trustees to act for them; viz. William Screven, William Brisbane, James Screven, Robert Screven, Thomas Dixon, William Screven, jun., Nathaniel Bullein, James Brisbane, David Stoll, and Samuel Stillman, who are characterized by their several professions, and as being “all members of the congregation of Anti-pædobaptists, meeting in Charlestown, holding the doctrines of particular election and final perseverance, and denying Arian, Arminian, and Socinian doctrines.” It is not known how many of these gentlemen were communicants in the church. They all, it seems, were at least its zealous friends and adherents. They purchased of Mrs. Martha Fowler, for the sum of £500 currency, a “lot of land, bounded to the westward on church street, and known in the plat of the town by the number 102,” for the purpose of a place of worship; and in 1746 built upon it a brick house, fifty-nine feet by forty-two, which is the building, with some enlargement, at present occupied as a Mariner’s church.

The church now saw themselves once more settled in a convenient house, and surrounded by a number of generous and valued friends. In spiritual strength they were not quite so much favored. Nominally, indeed, they had a considerable number of members in communion—all those who had gone from Edisto to Euhaw being still reckoned as belonging to the Charleston church. Morgan Edwards says of them, that “in 1738 a proposal from Charlestown church (of a dismission in order to be-

come a distinct society) was rejected by the people of Euhaw," that "during a period of sixty-three years" i. e. from their first settlement on Edisto under Lord Cardross, "they were considered as a branch of Charlestown; and they themselves took much pains (for reasons that do not now, 1772, appear,) to be considered as such, rather than a distinct church." But their connexion with the mother church was now to be dissolved; and under the direction and with the assistance of the Rev. Isaac Chanler, who had occasionally ministered to them, a solemn instrument of union was signed by the members, at Euhaw, May 5, 1746, and they became a distinct body.\* As to the communicants in Charleston, it seemed now as if the Lord would "quench the coal that was left;" as it is most probably this period of which Morgan Edwards has said, "the number of communicants was reduced to three souls; only one man (Mr. Sheppard) and two women remaining, that might be called a church."

Just in this gloomy crisis, however, it pleased God by the ministry of Mr. Whitefield, to revive his work; in the fruits of which the Baptists largely shared, and many joined them. There was now but one Baptist minister in all this part of the province, to whom the church could

\* This account of the constitution of the Euhaw church is taken from Mr. Morgan Edwards; but is fully confirmed by the account registered in the original minute book of the Charleston Association, and dated November 14, 1752. The meeting house at Euhaw was not built until 1751—2, at first thirty-six feet by thirty. "It so happened that as soon as the house was finished, *Mr. Whitefield* came by, and performed divine service in it for the first time, which was considered as its consecration." The lot connected with the church was of one acre, the gift of the Rev. Francis Pelot, its first Pastor, whose life became conspicuous in the subsequent history of the Baptists in Carolina. If the account of Morgan Edwards (collected by him in person on the spot, in 1772) is to be credited, Mr. Pelot was first a member of the Charleston church. "He was baptized at Euhaw, August 1, 1744; was called to the ministry in that church, May 8, 1746," three days after their separate constitution, "and was ordained by Rev. Messrs. Hart and Stephens, February 13,

look for aid, Rev. Mr. Chanler, Pastor of the Ashley River church : and so numerous were his engagements that he could serve them only once in a fortnight. Mr. Simons, their former Pastor, was still living, but not in fellowship; and any hopes which they might have had from his restoration, if any there were, was soon taken away ; for on January 31, 1747, at the age of seventy years, *he died*.—Notwithstanding that his connexion with the church issued so unhappily, he was generally esteemed a good man. One memorial only of his sentiments was left behind, viz. a piece published during his life, entitled “Some queries concerning the operations of the Holy Spirit answered.” But what was the character of the work is not known, as no copy of it seems to be extant.

After Mr. Simons’s death, Mr. Gracia and others of his adherents, who had shared his exclusion, confessed their fault, and were restored to fellowship; and but for the want of sufficient ministerial aid, the church, now united, might have indulged the hope of prosperity and comfort. To supply this defect, the church wrote both to Europe and the northern States for a minister of suitable character ; none, however, came to their relief. They

1751—2, at which time he took the care of the church.” Mr. Edwards makes the following curious notice of Mr. Pelot. “ He was born March 11, 1720, at Norville in Switzerland, and derives from his ancestors the privilege of burghership in said town, where also he had his education. He was bred a Presbyterian ; arrived in South Carolina October 28, 1734, where he possesses *three Islands* and about three thousand seven hundred and eighty-five acres on the continent, with slaves and stock in abundance. I mention this not to flatter my friend Pelot, but in hope that his conduct may influence other rich Planters to preach the gospel among the poor Baptists, when God inclines their hearts to it. His first wife was Martha Sealy. His present wife is Catherine, late widow of William Screven, and daughter of Justinus Stoll. His children are John, James, Samuel, Charles, and Benjamin, all single, except the eldest who married into the Guinn family, and has four children.” Mr. Pelot, could preach with equal ease in the English, French, and Dutch languages. His death occurred November 12, 1774. Mr. Hart preached his funeral sermon, conformably to his request, from John xiv : 19.

had only the service of their neighbor, Mr. Chanler, once in a fortnight. And while in this situation their faith and patience were soon put to the test in the most unexpected and distressing manner. Mr. Chanler, their only minister, sickened, and, on November 30, 1749, in the forty-eighth year of his age, he died.\* While many hearts were rent with anguish by the fall of this great and good man in Israel, we may well suppose that a mournful pause, in the hopes of the church, occurred.—Although known to them not longer than about sixteen years, Mr. Chanler had been intimate with the most painfully interesting portions of their history. From his near residence he had been with them in weal and in wo, the firm, enlightened and undeviating friend of truth, and of the cause of Christ. Being distinguished for talents and piety, a good scholar and a sound divine, “a worthy man, and abundant in labors,” he stood as a beacon light to the church through that stormy period,—that night of abounding heresy and error: and industriously sought, by the labors of the press, to extend that light beyond his immediate sphere, and into future generations. Beside the funeral sermon for the Rev. Mr. Tilly, already mentioned, he published “A Treatise on Original Sin,” and a work in small quarto, (Boston edition, 1744,) entitled “The doctrines of Glorious Grace, unfolded, defended, and practically improved: with an Appendix containing some remarks on the works of Mr. James Foster;” a work this, peculiarly seasonable at the time, and no doubt useful. But whatever he was in himself, or to the church

\*Mr. Chanler married Elizabeth Hunley, of Uxbridge in Hertfordshire, England. They had five children, Samuel, Ann, Isaac, Mary, Susanna. The late Isaac Chanler, M. D., was his son; and the present Rev. Mr. John Chanler is his grandson.

From a fragment of his journal, with the perusal of which I have been kindly favored by his family, he seems to have been a man of a truly spiritual mind and heavenly conversation.

in its peculiar circumstances, all had now sunk with him into the cold embrace of death. Let us, my brethren, endeavor to enter into their feelings. With them let us pause and review the wholesome discipline of our Heavenly Father; and while we sing of mercy and judgment, let us learn the lessons of wisdom from their varied and impressive history.

## PART II.

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On a former occasion, we pursued the history of this church to the period of the death of Mr. Chanler.

That was indeed a dark day. He had been for some time the only regular Baptist Minister in all this part of the Province; and on his melancholy removal, the church had no visible prospect before them, but of "a famine of hearing the words of the Lord."

But, while God's dispensations are mysterious, they are all wise; and while it is the rule of his administration to interpose with seasonable aid in the hour of his people's extremity, he sometimes brings them into the greatest straits, that they may better appreciate and improve the blessings he bestows. The Lord had provided an instrument by which he designed greatly to promote the cause of truth and piety in the province, in the person of the Rev. Oliver Hart; and having selected the Charleston Church as the honored receptacle of such a gift, he prepared them to value it by quenching the only lamp that gleamed through the dark wilderness around. The feelings of the more reflecting part of the church, therefore, can be better imagined than described, when they discovered that *on the very day* on which "devout men carried" Mr. Chanler "to his burial, and made great lamentation over him," *Mr. Hart arrived in the city.* This eminent Minister was born in Warminster Town-

ship, Buck's county, Pennsylvania, July 5, 1723. It was his happiness to grow up at a period when God was remarkably reviving his work in this country, through the ministry of his servants Whitefield, Edwards, the Tennents; and we may add also, Abel Morgan and others of the Baptist Church. Some of these Mr. Hart used to hear, and was much impressed by their ministry; particularly by that of Mr. Whitefield. It pleased God to arrest him early by his grace, and bring him to the knowledge of the truth; and being convinced of believers' baptism, he was baptised at the place of his nativity, by the Rev. Mr. Jenkin Jones, April 3, 1741, before he had completed his eighteenth year. In the same year, he united himself to a Baptist Church at Southampton.

It is probable, from some circumstances, that his mind was soon impressed with the great duty of preaching the Gospel, and that he began at once to share in the duties of prayer and exhortation, on fit occasions. When he had been about five years and a half in the profession of religion, he was called out into the ministry, and licensed to preach, December 20, 1746. If, as Mr. Jones (History of the Philadelphia Association) says, he was a fellow student of Samuel and David Jones, James Manning, Hezekiah Smith, David Thomas, John Gano, the Suttons and others, at the institution established at Hopewell, N. J. under the care of the Rev. Isaac Eaton, it must have been about this period. For on October 18, 1749, he was solemnly ordained and set apart to the ministry of the word and ordinances; and immediately thereafter, impelled as it should seem only by his own feelings, (or rather conducted by the kind providence of God,) he set out for Carolina, and arrived in Charleston, as we have seen, December 2, 1749. Mr. Hart was now twenty-six years of age. He immediately began to preach to the destitute church;—and they were so edified by his ministry, as well as struck with the providential circumstances



of his arrival, that they immediately called him to the pastoral care of the church, which he assumed, February 16, 1750.

Although not insensible to the extent and importance of the particular field assigned him, he yet was so convinced of the importance of united counsels and efforts to individual success, that one of the first objects which engaged his attention, was the union of the infant Baptist churches into an Association. In this enterprise, he found an able and ready co-adjutor in the Rev. Mr. Francis Pelot, of Euhaw, a man of classical education, and of kindred feelings and spirit with himself. These two, seconded by Mr. John Stephens, (installed pastor at Ashley River, June 22, 1750,) and by Messrs. John Brown, and Joshua Edwards, (ordained in the church at Welch *Tract*,\* the one on May 7, 1750, the other, June 15, 1751,) very soon impressed the churches with the importance of the plan they were meditating. Wherefore, having procured from Philadelphia, through the agency of Mr. Hart, a copy of Rev. Mr. Benjamin Griffith's essay on the nature, powers, and duty, of an Association, as a guide to their proceedings, and the basis of their union, they fixed on October 21, 1751, as the time when the ministers and messengers of the *four* Churches should meet in Charleston, to form their desired union. Thus originated that venerable and useful body "the Charleston Baptist Association;" of which Mr. Hart was the father, and which was a medium through which he continued to shed upon the denomination in South Carolina, the benign influences of his well balanced mind, for thirty years.

Mr. Hart's preaching attracted considerable attention in Charleston, and his character, universal respect. Had he possessed a less spiritual mind, he would have found enough food for self gratulation in the general approbation

\* Now Welsh-Neck—constituted in 1738.

with which he was received by all ranks.\* But this did not satisfy him. While his great end in life was the glory of God, he viewed the salvation of sinners as a principal means of promoting it. He longed for the souls of men; and was jealous over them and himself, with a godly jealousy, lest by any means he should run in vain. The exercises of his mind now became intense, and the holy humiliation and strong desire which are the usual preparatives of a great blessing, are breathed in the following extract :

“Monday, August 5, 1754. I do this morning feel myself under a sense of my barrenness: Alas! what do I for God? I am, indeed, employed in his vineyard; but I fear to little purpose. I feel a want of the life and power of religion in *my own heart*. This causes such a languor in all my duties to God. This makes me so poor an improver of time. Alas! I am frequently on my bed, when I ought to be on my knees—to my shame. Sometimes the sun appears in the horizon, and begins his daily course, before I have paid my tribute of praise to God; and perhaps while I am indulging myself in inactive slumbers. O wretched stupidity! Oh that for time to come, I may be more active for God! I would this morning resolve before thee, O God! and in thy name and strength, to devote myself more unreservedly to thy service, than I have hitherto done. I would resolve to be a better improver of my time than I have heretofore been. To rise earlier in the morning, to be sooner with thee in secret devotion, and Oh that I may be more devout therein! I would be more engaged in my studies. Grant, O

\* A very pleasing evidence of the light in which he continued to be regarded in Charleston, occurred some years after, about 1770. “He was robbed of about £30. When the fact was known in town, the gentlemen of other societies made him a present of £730, which they raised among themselves, without the help of his own people.”

Lord! that I may improve more by them. And when I go abroad, enable me better to improve my visits; that I may always leave a savour of divine things behind me. When I go to thy house to speak for thee, may I always go full fraught with things divine, and be enabled faithfully and feelingly to dispense the word of life. I would begin and end every day with thee. Teach me to study thy glory in all I do. And wilt thou be with me also in the night watches; teach me to meditate of thee on my bed; may my sleep be sanctified to me, that I may thereby be fitted to thy service, nor ever desire more than answers this important end. Thus teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom."

Very shortly after the date of this pious effusion, the great work of grace began under his ministry; and very many, especially of the young, were brought to the knowledge of the truth. This revival is rendered memorable as having been the season at which that distinguished servant of God, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stillman, late of Boston, was brought into the church. Born in Philadelphia, he was brought by his parents in his eleventh year, to this city, where he received the rudiments of his education in the academy of a Mr. Rind. He had had early impressions of religion, his parents being pious:—but under the ministry of Mr. Hart, to use his own words, his "mind was again solemnly impressed with a sense of his awful condition as a sinner. This conviction grew stronger and stronger. His condition alarmed him. He saw himself without Christ and without hope. He found that he deserved the wrath to come, and that God would be just to send him to hell. He was now frequently on his knees pleading for mercy. As a beggar he went, knowing nothing but guilt, and no plea but mercy."—He obtained soon a degree of hope, though not entire satisfaction; until one day he heard Mr. Hart preach from the words, Mat. i: 21: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus,

for he shall save his people from their sins." During this discourse he found the blessing he had been seeking.— "Christ," says he, "then became precious to me, yea all in all. Then I could say of wisdom, her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. That, I still think, was the day of my espousal. Glory be to God for the riches of his grace. Why me, Lord? &c." He was accordingly baptised by Mr. Hart; and having views to the ministry, he was placed in a course of study under the patronage of a society formed in Charleston in 1755, called "The Religious Society." At the call of the church he was licensed; and he preached his first sermon, February 17, 1758. In the preceding year, Mr. Nicholas Bedgegood, a minister of education and popular talents, who had been employed by Mr. Whitefield in his Orphan House near Savannah, since 1751, came to Charleston; and, professing a change of sentiments on the subject of baptism, was baptised by Mr. Hart, and received into the church. With two such promising young men, under such a Pastor, the church could not but feel herself rich in ministerial gifts; and, willing to make them more useful, called them both to ordination. Mr. Pelot was sent for, and the ordination of Samuel Stillman and Nicholas Bedgegood occurred in this church, February 26, 1759. Mr. Pelot preached the sermon, which was afterwards published.

It is the church's duty to sow the seeds of usefulness, though she "know not which shall prosper, this or that, or whether they both shall be good alike." These young men were now in the morning of life, and of promise to the church; Mr. Stillman, twenty-two, and Mr. Bedgegood, twenty-nine years of age; and they both commenced their ministerial career among the Baptists together. But the issue of that career was not with equal honor, usefulness, and comfort. Mr. Bedgegood was retained in Charleston as assistant to Mr. Hart; and, by his

popular talents and pleasing address, gained so much upon the admiration of a number of persons, that an attempt was made to supplant Mr. Hart, and to place the assistant in the pastoral office. Mr. Hart had the sagacity to penetrate Mr. Bedgegood's character, felt conscientiously bound to oppose this measure, and had influence enough to defeat it. His opposition, however, was attributed, by some, to envy and interested motives; and several of the wealthier members of the congregation withdrew, and left him. Mr. Bedgegood afterwards removed to the Pee Dee, and there married. It being reported that his wife in England (who had refused to follow him to America) was still living, the Association summoned him to appear, and explain the matter. But, while he justified himself on the ground that he had heard of the death of his wife, he did not attend, and the Association disowned him. He died in 1773 or 1774.

Mr. Stillman, after his ordination, preached on James Island, and with such good acceptance and success, that in the same year, 1759, a meeting house was erected for him on that Island, under the authority and care of the Charleston church, on a lot\* purchased of Dr. William Brisbane. But in the course of eighteen months, and before the arrangements, which he was fast making for a permanent establishment, could be matured, he was seized with a pulmonary affection, which made a change of residence necessary for him. His settlement on the Island, though agreeable, he abandoned, as he afterwards wrote, under a clear conviction of duty: and removed, first, to Bordentown, New Jersey, where he served two congregations, two years;—next, to Boston, Massachusetts, where, from 1763 to the period of his death in 1807, he exercised his ministry, characterized by eminent piety,

\* This lot, the site of the old church, is still to be seen, all overgrown with forest trees, and is of some value. It is subject to the claim of the Charleston Baptist Church.

shining talents, fervid and impassioned eloquence, and almost unrivalled popularity and success. His first degree in literature was received from the University of Pennsylvania. In 1761, Harvard University, Cambridge, bestowed on him the honorary degree of A. M.; and the College of Rhode Island, of which he was both a Trustee and a Fellow, in 1788 gave him a diploma of Doctor in Divinity. He had the singular happiness of retaining the vivacity and attraction of his ministry to the age of seventy years;—and according to a desire he had publicly expressed while in health, his life and labors terminated together.\*

It was an honor to Mr. Hart and the church, to have given to the world such a minister.

In 1755, in consequence of a query sent by this church, the Charleston Association began their scheme of itinerant missions in South Carolina. Mr. Hart was empowered to procure a suitable person, who, on his arrival, should be required to preach before the Charleston and Ashley River churches. If they approved, he was to be commissioned to proceed; otherwise his expenses were to be paid, and he was to be dismissed. The first minister they obtained being the Rev. John Gano, it is unnecessary to say that he gave universal satisfaction. In 1802, the same work of benevolence, which had been suspended by the war, was revived by means of a query from this church. The present arrangement of the home mission took place, in consequence of a query from the Mount Pisgah church, in 1817.

While the Philadelphia Association were organizing a systematic plan of ministerial education, (their first resolution on the subject was in 1756,) Mr. Hart and his church, and their friends in Charleston, had founded "The Religious Society" in 1755, with a view to the

\* See a larger account of him prefixed to a volume of sermons published since his death. Also in Benedict's History of the Baptists.

same important object. And in 1757, in order to engage their brethren throughout the province in common efforts with them, this church sent the following query to the Charleston Association ; viz. "Whether there could not be some method concluded upon, to furnish, with suitable degrees of learning, those among us who appear to have promising gifts for the ministry?" In answering this question, the Association commenced their Education Fund. The members took it up with such spirit that £60 were pledged from Charleston, £40 from Ashley River, £20 from Enhaw Indian Land, £5 from Lynch's Creek, the same from Cashaway, and £3 from Catfish church—in all, £133. Of this fund, Mr. Hart was the first Treasurer; and Messrs. Hart, Pelot, and Stephens were appointed Trustees.\* It may be here remarked as matter of devout gratitude to God, that this church has ever since been able to continue its yearly contributions to that fund: and in about the same proportion to the whole amount contributed from all sources, as on occasion of its origin. What benefit to the church of Christ and to the souls of men is to be comprehended within the results of this important measure, can be known only by Him who "seeth the end from the beginning."

During all this period, the General Baptists had possession of the original meeting house, and it should seem of the parsonage house also, built on the same lot. But

\* The General Committee for the management of this fund and other important objects, grew out of a conviction that those churches which contributed the fund, ought to have the exclusive management of it; and was instituted in pursuance of a resolution passed in 1789. In 1790, Richard Furman, Silas Mercer, Benjamin Mosely, and Henry Holcombe, were requested to bring in a plan for its organization; and they laid down three leading principles, on the basis of which the present rules of the committee were constructed. They were finally matured and signed, November 7, 1792, by Richard Furman, Henry Holcombe, Edmund Botsford, Alexander Scott, Bradley Rhame, Benjamin Mosely, Stephen Nixon, Isham Gardner, James Sweat. Their corporate style is "The General Committee for the Charleston Baptist Association Fund."

in the year 1758, an agreement took place between them and the church, (styled Particular Baptists,) by which the use of the meeting house was resigned to the General Baptists, and that of the parsonage secured to the church, as a place of residence for their minister. And this suited the church very well, as they had been obliged, twelve years before, to build themselves a house of worship.

The church now enjoyed a steady season of peace and prosperity ; while Mr. Hart continued to grow in the affection and esteem of all parties. Had the records been preserved, it is probable they would have presented but little beyond the ordinary experience of all churches similarly circumstanced.

In the year 1767, the church received into its membership Mr. Edmund Matthews. He was a native of Bristol, England ; had been converted to God after his emigration to this country, and was baptised by the Rev. Philip Mulkey. The church in Charleston, perceiving in him gifts and graces, which, with God's blessing, might make him "helpful in the ministry," licensed him to preach, November 8, 1767. He married Martha Hinds, and on February 8, 1770, he was ordained as an Evangelist ; and presently removed his residence to Hilton Head Island, where was a meeting house owned by the Baptists, (according to Morgan Edwards,) in which Mr. Matthews officiated for some time. This meeting house had been built by persons connected with the Euhaw church, and was still under their authority ; and Mr. Matthews was considered as an assistant to Mr. Pelot. It is worthy of remark, that this minister was a grandson of the famous *Thomas Hobbes*, author of the "*Leviathan* ;" who, without aiming any of his publications *directly* against revealed religion, did more than almost any other man to spread infidelity. Whether the grandson had imbibed his sentiments previous to his conversion, is not known. Mr. Matthews was living as late as 1775, and in that year was



one of the delegates to the Association from this church. But, of his subsequent course, and of the period of his death, we find no account.

About the period of Mr. Matthews' reception into the church, an important accession, as it proved, was gained in Mr. Edmund Botsford. He had arrived in Charleston in the preceding year, January 28th, 1766, then in the twenty-first year of his age; and, under the ministry of Mr. Hart, he became a subject of grace. The day signalled by this instance of saving mercy was November 1, 1766; "a day," says Mr. Botsford, "of light, a day of joy and peace." He was baptized by Mr. Hart, the 13th of March following; and as circumstances soon developed his predilections for the ministry, together with the possession of suitable gifts, he was encouraged by Mr. Hart, and the church, to devote himself to that holy calling. Preparatory to it, he was placed under the gratuitous instruction of Mr. David Williams, then a member of the church, a learned and excellent man, father of the late Gen. David R. Williams. Mr. Hart directed his theological studies.\* He was licensed in February 1771, and on March 14, 1772, was ordained as a minister of Christ; the Rev. Messrs. Oliver Hart and Francis Pelot assisting at the ordination. The life of Mr. Botsford is of sufficient interest in itself to require a volume. His usefulness to this church, at a period of great destitution and need, demands for his memory our profound esteem and warmest

\* It was then customary to place young men, who were approved of their churches as having a call to preach, under instruction, for some time, before they were licensed. And by common consent they were usually not ordained, until they had visited "some of the churches in union, and preached before the Association, and obtained their approbation." This method had been agreed on in 1755, and the Association say that "it would have a tendency to keep novices, weak, and disorderly persons out of the work; and to detect those who would intrude themselves; and thus prevent the ministry from being brought into contempt." A similar recommendation was repeated in 1803.

gratitude: and notwithstanding our inadequacy to be his biographer, we should feel bound to record some humble tribute to his memory, in connexion with the history of this church, were we not able to refer you to an interesting memoir of him, lately published in this city, and written by the Rev. Charles D. Mallary, who has inherited that privilege from an alliance with Mr. Botsford's grand-daughter. Suffice it to say of him, here, that, after his ordination, he spent some time on Brier Creek, Georgia; in Edgefield District, S. C.; at Society Hill on the Pee Dee, where he was Pastor of the Welsh Neck church until 1796:—and, after having preached the Gospel in various parts of the southern States, with eminent success, he closed his valuable life at Georgetown, S. C., where he had been the honored, beloved, and useful Pastor of the Baptist church, for twenty-three years, on the 25th of December, 1819, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

Between the year 1770 and the commencement of hostilities with the mother country, the church seem to have entertained the idea of erecting a new place of worship, and of establishing a separate interest. There is an account on record of the execution of a conveyance on the part of Patrick Hinds and Ann his wife, for a certain lot on the south side of Liberty street. The trustees mentioned in the conveyance, (dated July 31, 1771,) are William Brisbane, Justinus Stoll, Nathaniel Bullein, James Brisbane, David Stoll, Patrick Hinds, David Williams, Thomas Rivers, John Rivers and Thomas Screven; and the lot is declared to be for the purpose of a place of religious worship. Whatever the design was, nothing seems to have been done beyond the purchase of the lot. I am not able to trace the lot out of the church's possession; but I suppose it was sold, to assist them in the repairs of their edifice, after the close of the Revolution. When the troubles of the Revolution began, Mr. Hart, and the church generally, very warmly espoused the

cause of the country. At this time, Mr. Hart had acquired considerable acquaintance and great influence in the back-country; so that the "Council of Safety," desirous of exerting a salutary influence on the people of the interior, in relation to the measures of Congress and the political interests of the country, appointed him, in 1775, together with the Rev. Mr. William Tennent, and the Hon. William H. Drayton, to travel among them, for the purpose of conciliating them to the government, engaging them in its support, and removing their misapprehension and prejudice. "It was believed that the influence Mr. Hart exerted on this occasion was the means of preventing bloodshed, when the tories first embodied."

Still in prosecution of the same design, dear alike to the church and its Pastor, Mr. Hart went, early in 1776, to the High Hills of Santee, where a numerous meeting of dissenting ministers and others had been called to consult on measures for the common welfare. There, the Rev. Joseph Cook, father of the present Rev. Joseph B. Cook, was baptized by the Rev. Mr. Furman, then Pastor of the Baptist church at that place. He was immediately ordained by Rev. Messrs. Hart and Furman. As Mr. Cook's residence was near Dorchester, he took his dismissal immediately, and joined the Charleston church; as we find that, in 1777, he was a member, and represented the church in the Association, in November of that year. He had been educated by Lady Huntingdon at her college of Trevecca, in Brecknockshire, South Wales, came over to this country on a mission, at her suggestion, and under her patronage; and was a while at Mr. Whitefield's Orphan House, in Georgia, under the late Dr. Percy. In 1778, he was called to the charge of the Euhaw church, as the successor of Mr. Pelot. His ministry, especially after the Revolution, during which he had passed through some trying and humbling scenes, was peculiarly impressive. He was both "a son of

thunder," and "a son of consolation;"—and many will remember him with lively emotions to their latest day. He closed his useful life, September 26, 1790, in the prime of manhood, being only a little more than forty years of age.

The Legislature of the State having invited the various churches to apply for charters with equal rights and privileges, this church very early applied for, and obtained, incorporation;—the charter under which it now acts bearing date March 19, 1778. For several years after this, however, they continued to transact their secular business through the agency of trustees.

In 1779 there was a minister, by the name of Newton, belonging to this church,—the Rev. John Newton. But of him I have been able to learn nothing more than his name.

South Carolina was now destined to become the sanguinary scene of war, and on the approach of the British to Charleston, Mr. Hart's friends advised his retreat. Accordingly, in the month of February, 1780, he took his departure from his affectionate people, and, as it proved, his final departure from the southern States. On his way he was joined by Mr. Botsford, who went with him as far as Virginia, where he remained during the remainder of the war. Mr. Hart continued his course to New Jersey; and, in December following, at the solicitation of the Baptist Church at Hopewell, he took the pastoral care of them, and continued in that relation until his death. He had not long left Charleston, when it fell into the hands of the enemy; and, probably out of revenge against Mr. Hart and his society, they seized on both the meeting houses, converted the principal one into a store house for salt beef and other provisions, and made a forage house of the other, which was still in possession of the General Baptists.

From that time, all public worship was suspended in

this church, until independence was gained, and peace restored.

But this was not the only way in which the church suffered during that distressing struggle. From a statement made after Mr. Hart's departure, viz: April 27, 1780, by Col. Thomas Screven, the acting Trustee, and certified by Major Benjamin Smith, and Mr. Thomas Smith, the church possessed indents, &c., then in Col. Screven's hands, to the amount of £14,700. This sum was in the currency of the country, a guinea being of the value of £7,75, and had been accumulating through most of the years of Mr. Hart's prosperous ministry. The friends of religion, then, instead of bequeathing their property to heirs, "they knew not who;" or even leaving *all* their substance to their own children and family, made the church their legatee. Several of the benevolent donors are mentioned: Providence Hutchinson, gave £400, James Fowler £500, William Screven, grandson of minister Screven £600, Martha De Harriette £500, Benjamin De Harriette £500, Elizabeth Gibbs £1000, Messrs. Justinus Stoll, Thomas Rivers, and Patrick Hinds £600, and William Tilly, son of Minister Tilly, of Edisto Island, gave, besides all his own and his father's books, the sum of £3076, 14, 6. This last sum consisted of bonds at interest; the assignment of them was made, March 9, 1772, to James Brisbane, William Brisbane, Thomas Screven, Thomas Rivers, David Williams, Patrick Hinds, and John Rivers, Trustees of the Baptist Congregation. The annual interest was to be paid to Mr. Tilly, for his support during life; at his death, the trustees were to bury him out of the principal; and then, forever thereafter, the interest to be applied to the support of the Rev. Oliver Hart, and his successors in office. The available fund in 1772, was sufficient to yield an annual income of £1430. But, by various losses sustained during the war, and particularly by the depreciation of paper currency,

it was found when the war was ended, (as appears by a statement dated February 22, 1784,) that all the funds of the church, as well as the debts due them, reduced to sterling, according to the established rate of depreciation, amounted but to £444, 6, 3,  $\frac{1}{2}$ . The government being then greatly embarrassed by the expenses of the war, all the money they had in hand, viz: £331, 16, 6, was put into the public treasury. I suppose it was again refunded to them in due time; but of this we have no account.

But all their privations and losses might well be borne, in view of the unspeakable blessings, both civil and religious, which the Revolution had gained. The price it had cost was immense; and this church seem to have paid their full share; yet all was forgotten in the grateful sentiments which the dawn of liberty inspired. Their place of worship, long desecrated by the possession and vile use of the enemy, they yet venerated more than ever; because it was now nearly associated with the triumph of civil and religious freedom—with the complete establishment of those principles of entire toleration, the glory of this country, for which the Baptists had been the first to contend,\* and for which the founders of this very church had suffered. With gratitude and alacrity, therefore, becoming the momentous period, the scattered church assembled, on the restoration of peace; fitted up their

\* "The *true grounds* of liberty of conscience were not understood in America, until Mr. Williams and John Clarke publicly avowed, *that Christ alone is King in his own Kingdom*, and that *no others* had authority over his subjects, in the affairs of conscience and eternal salvation." Mr. Callender's Century Sermon.

Governor Hopkins said, "Roger Williams justly claimed the honor of being the first legislator in the world, that fully and effectually provided for, and established, a free, full and absolute liberty of conscience." His principle was that "civil magistrates, *as such*, have no power in the church; and that Christians, *as such*, are subject to no laws or control, but those of King Jesus." This he constantly and publicly maintained from his arrival in America in 1631. See Benedict's History of the Baptists, vol. 1, 475—7.

building with a temporary pulpit and seats, (for every thing of the kind had been demolished by the British,) and agreed, April 14, 1783, to invite, through their trustees,\* the Rev. Mr. Hart's return. The letter was written by the Rev. Richard Furman, who was then in town on a visit. In reply, June 26, 1783, Mr. Hart declined the invitation; and assigns, as his reasons, the providential direction he had received to Hopewell, New Jersey—the strength of mutual attachments—the pleasing prospects of the church he then served—his own better health—his opinion that a younger and more active man was necessary for them—and his comparative want of success during the latter part of his residence in Charleston. He advises that, until temporals can be better arranged for the comfortable support of a Pastor, they should content themselves with such occasional supplies as could be obtained, from their own and other denominations. Although this advice did not seem to meet the views of the church, they were yet unable to procure a Pastor for several years. Meanwhile they took means to increase their funds. The parsonage house was rented out for £50, and Messrs. Rivers and Gourlay were requested, June 20, 1783, to look into the state of the Edisto glebe lands. As these lands had been procured by members in communion with the Charleston church, the titles had remained in Charleston after the removal of the members to Euhaw; but the Euhaw church, from its first regular establishment until the Revolution, had enjoyed the rents. The Charleston Church now again took possession of the rents,† directed Mr. Thomas Screven, December 15,

\* The trustees present on this occasion were Patrick Hinds, John Gourlay, John Hamilton, and Thomas Screven.

†It seems that the distresses of the Revolution had dispersed and nearly broken up the Euhaw Church; and that there were no members who might attend to its temporal interests. There is an account among the papers of the Charleston Church of a sum of money belonging to Euhaw,

to lease the land ; and on March 8, 1784, he reported that he had effected a lease to Mrs. Sarah Seabrook. Thus matters continued with respect to these lands, until 1787, when the Euhaw church put in a claim to the rents. In reply, the trustees agree to give the land up, provided the trustees of Euhaw will give a pledge in writing, to relinquish it to any Baptist Church, of the same faith and order, which may hereafter be constituted on that island. This promise was given in the following words : “ Your requesting it, from under our hands, that we will give it up whenever the Baptist Church should be formed there, has the appearance of superiority, or that you are dubious of our honor. Be assured, brethren, we neither design to embezzle the land, nor to offer it for sale ; neither do we wish ever to see it become private property. All we request is our right to its income, which privilege our church has enjoyed for a number of years. Therefore we cannot give it up, before a church of the same faith and order is re-established there ; then, we do assure you, for ourselves and the church for which we act, it shall be given up : as it would be matter of the greatest exhilaration to us to see a regular Baptist church, formed on Edisto Island ; and shall, on that consideration, as cheerfully relinquish all right and claim unto the said glebe, for the intention of the donor, and not before.”

Signed by

WILLIAM HOGG,  
WILLIAM WELLS,  
DERRY GILLISON,  
CHARLES BEALER,

as trustees for the Euhaw Church.

The titles were accordingly surrendered to Mr. John Screven for the trustees of Euhaw, and there the matter ended.

obtained from the executors of the Rev. Mr. Pelot, in 1784, and paid over to its proper owners, as soon as they were in a condition to receive it.



The number of trustees\* was increased, March 8, 1784; and at the same time they resolved on calling the Rev. Mr. Richard Furman to the pastoral charge. His engagements with the church at the High Hills of Santee, at this period, formed impediments to his removal, which he could not surmount. The church therefore renewed their call to Mr. Hart. This second invitation threw him into a distressing perplexity, from which he scarcely knew how to escape. After a little delay, however, he recommended them to invite Mr. Furman, and promised that, if they failed in that attempt, he would either come himself or send them one better qualified. The church feeling scarcely at liberty to make a second application to Mr. Furman, Mr. Hart writes, August 2, 1785, to urge them to do it, suggests some means they should take in order to obtain his consent; speaks of him as "a prize of inestimable worth," which they should by no means lose; and concludes by exhorting them all to pray earnestly for the object, to engage also the prayers of other Christians; and adds, "if he comes in answer to prayer, he will come with a blessing." He wrote, at the same time, to Mr. Furman to urge his acceptance of their call. The church, it is believed, followed Mr. Hart's wise and pious counsel; and ultimately obtained their object.

Meanwhile the church was occasionally supplied with preaching. Once in three months, some of the ministers from the country came down to administer ordinances;—and sometimes they would spend several weeks in town. Mr. Furman himself often came, and was greatly blessed in building up the church. The names also of Joshua

\* The names of the trustees, during this period and for a few years following, were Thomas Screven, Patrick Hinds, John Gourlay, John Hamilton, Thomas Rivers, Jeremiah Brown, Charles McDonald, John Hart, and John Michael. And they were authorised to transact all business without consulting the church, except in new or very important cases which might require special instruction.

Lewis, James Fowler, Joseph Redding, and of various others, were rendered dear to the church by these labors of love. Mr. Botsford's labors were frequently bestowed here, during this period; and his visits were greeted as the harbingers of christian strength and consolation. At one time, when he had spent two months in town, he writes, March 30, 1785, "There is a pretty work begun. We go from house to house; and, blessed be God, sweet times we have: several are under serious impressions; crowds attend the public meetings, and in the private meetings I have introduced praying for those poor distressed souls who ask." About this time, also, the Methodist brethren obtained their first establishment in Charleston. The place of worship they occupied for some time was the old Baptist meeting house,\* then left vacant, of which they had the gratuitous use, and which stood nearly on the spot where we are now sitting.— Their preaching also excited attention, and a period of unusual seriousness ensued. The Baptist church received many valuable additions: among which was Col. Thomas Screven, great grandson of the first Pastor, and son-in-law to Mr. Hart; and who was the active, useful friend, Treasurer, and Deacon of the church for many years.†— Two young ministers also were now brought into the church, the Rev. Peter Bainbridge and the Rev. Charles O. Screven, late Pastor of the Baptist church in Sunbury, Georgia. These were baptized nearly about the same

\* This building continued until 1808; when, being in a ruinous condition, it was taken down.

† The only white person now living who was a member of the church during this period, is our venerable sister, Mrs. Ann Gourlay, widow of Deacon John Gourlay. She was baptized 1770, and was received by letter into this church in 1785. Some colored members there are who were baptized, before Dr. Furman became Pastor. But the number of colored members was then very small; and continued so until the time of Peter Wood, a worthy, faithful exhorter, who was exceedingly useful among his own color. He died in 1809.

time, in the latter part of 1785 or the beginning of 1786. Mr. Bainbridge was twenty-two years of age ; Mr. Screven was but a lad. The former gave encouraging promise of usefulness and distinction, and held a respectable standing for a few years ; but ended not so well. He removed in 1791 to Maryland. The latter grew up, like Samuel, in the house and at the altar of God,—was its faithful and honored minister for many years, and lately closed a life of usefulness, in a temper ripe for glory.\*

During this period, the trustees engaged with zeal and energy in the repairs and enlargement of the meeting house. Since the peace, they had borne a principal part of the expenses of the church themselves ; but now a general effort became necessary. The prospects of the congregation were such as to render more room desirable. To effect this, the front part of the building was extended several feet toward the street ; three galleries were erected, and vestry rooms prepared ; a baptistery was built, (for, before that, the ordinance was administered in a font situated in our present church yard,) a new pulpit was erected, and the situation of it changed, from what had been the end of the house, to what became the end after the alterations. Subscription papers were drawn, and circulated, in 1785 and 6, among the community at large, who felt a great sympathy for them on account of their known distresses during the Revolution. The sums obtained by these means, amounted to \$2341.48. To this the congregation added all their own funds ;—but were still left in debt. And the debt was not finally discharged, until after the pew-system went into operation. They then by common agreement laid an assessment on the pews equal to half the annual rent, and no one was considered the holder of a pew until the assessment was paid. The sum thus obtained, together with the avails of sub-

\* See a brief memoir of him at the end.

scriptions promoted chiefly by Mr. John Hart, son of the minister and a member of the church, in 1788 and 90, freed the congregation from debt.

The church meanwhile had taken measures, according to Mr. Hart's advice, to obtain a Pastor; and sent a renewed and urgent call to Mr. Furman. With the deliberation and conscientiousness which ever characterized all his movements, he took the subject into serious consideration. The claims of duty seemed strong in favor of his acceptance. To obtain a proper supply for the church of which he was then Pastor, at the High Hills of Santee, was a principal difficulty: and as Mr. Bainbridge was now a licentiate of promise in the Charleston church, Mr. Furman wrote to town as follows: "I remain in great perplexity about removing to Charleston, and for that reason should be glad if Mr. Bainbridge could come to the Hills as soon as possible; as I think it might be a means of opening the way of duty, both to him and myself."—Finally, however, the difficulty was surmounted by the clear convictions of duty in his own mind, and he accepted the call. His pastoral relation was reckoned to commence, in effect, from the 18th of October, 1787; although he did not remove his particular membership, nor his residence, to town, until after the meeting of the Association, in November of that year.

We have now entered on the most important period of the church's history; and the many endeared and consecrated recollections which are this moment excited by the mention of that relation in which the departed man of God stood, your guide, your friend, your father, eminently amiable and beloved, dignified and respected—lead you to expect a rich and holy repast in the detail of that prosperity which, under his wise and able administration, the church enjoyed.

I am sorry, truly sorry, my brethren, that in this respect I am not able to gratify you. The history of the church,

from 1787 to 1825, is so involved in the life of your late revered pastor, that, with the materials in hand, to attempt a complete outline of it, would be in effect to become his *biographer*,—a task too weighty for me to accomplish, and an honor to which I dare not aspire. A short record only, and that of no longer standing than the year 1819, is in possession of the church; the materials which have fallen into my hands, of any other kind, are but very meagre and disjointed: and I was not willing to seek for information which might have been accessible, lest I should forestall the expected publication, by an able hand, of a memoir of his life, together with a collection of his writings. All that remains to me, therefore, is to present you with a few broken facts in your history, and to refer you to the richer source, which, it is hoped, divine Providence may soon unfold.

The first object of importance that presents itself, relates to a method of steadily providing an adequate income.

Formerly, the fund which the church possessed, while it had a Pastor, had nearly answered all demands, and when an additional sum was required, a subscription was resorted to. But immediately on the settlement of Dr. Furman, the system of pew rents was established, as being more equal, regular, and efficient; and a part of the original subscription,\* which had been raised for his support before his arrival, was cancelled with a view to the new arrangement.

Almost simultaneously with his settlement, the church obtained entire possession of the parsonage and lot, No. 62, which they had held in common with the General Baptists for forty-two years. That party being now ex-

\* Before the call was given, thirty-one persons had subscribed \$1179 27 towards his support. His salary was afterwards fixed at £200. In 1793 it was increased to £230, and so on, gradually, as circumstances altered, until it amounted to \$2000.

tinued, a petition was signed, February 14, 1787, by thirty-three gentlemen, members of the congregation, praying the Legislature to rescind their former act of partition, and confirm to the incorporated Baptist Church, the sole use both of the meeting house and lot. This request the Legislature granted. A few years afterwards, the City Council, supposing that one moiety of this property was liable to escheat to the State, passed a resolution, (March 3, 1801,) directing the Recorder of the city, to take the necessary measures to secure it, according to the law, for the benefit of the Orphan House. But on hearing a committee of the church, of which Dr. Furman was chairman, the Council gave up the claim, withdrew all proceedings, and caused an entry to be made on their records, acknowledging the title to be in the Particular Baptists.

Hitherto the temporal affairs of the church, and even the call of a Pastor, were managed by trustees; who, on particular occasions, consulted the congregation. But the propriety of a more systematic arrangement of congregational concerns was now suggested, and a committee of seven, consisting of the Rev. Richard Furman, Thomas Screven, William Inglesby, Thomas Rivers, E. North, Isham Williams, and John McIver, were appointed to frame constitutional rules and by-laws, under the charter they had obtained in 1778. The report of that committee issued in the enactment of the original rules of the corporation, August 21, 1791; which, with some important amendments, agreed on by the corporation, April 2, 1824, are the rules by which the incorporated Baptist Church, of Charleston, is now governed. And here, be it once for all recorded, with humble gratitude to God, that the uniform influence of those gentlemen who have been associated with the church in the management of corporate concerns, has been good; and to the generous efforts of some of them, more than of any other, the church owes a principal part of its temporal prosperity;—of which many

living examples might be now mentioned, if delicacy would allow. From the first adoption of these rules, the progress of the church has been regular and steady, and its history but little diversified.

In 1792, Dr. Furman took a special interest in bringing forward the son of the late Rev. Joseph Cook, to the notice of the General Committee; and he was received under their patronage in that year, at their meeting in Coosawhatchie. The following year, January 6, 1793, he was baptized at the Welsh Neck church, by Rev. Mr. Botsford; in 1794, he was sent, in company with the late Dr. Roberts, to Providence, where, after a collegiate course of three years, he was graduated, September 6, 1797. Soon after his return from college, he became a member of this church, and was by it put forward into the ministry. Early in the year 1799, and while engaged as tutor in the family of the late Col. Thomas Shubrick, he was called by this church to the exercise of his gifts; and preached his first sermon in Charleston, from Isa. 57, 21.

He was regularly licensed\* by the church, on March 3d, 1799; and not long after, receiving a call to the pastoral charge of the Euhaw Baptist church, he was ordained in Beaufort, (where he preached half his time,) January 9, 1800, by the Rev. Drs. Furman and Holcombe.

No man more fully appreciated the particular obligations of the pastoral relation than did Dr. Furman: yet

\* His certificate of license is in the following words:

“ Charleston, S. C.

The Baptist Church of Christ in Charleston, holding eternal election of grace, special vocation, redemption by the blood of Christ, justification by his righteousness imputed, sanctification by the Divine spirit, perseverance of the saints in grace, believers' baptism, &c.

To all christian people send greeting. These are to certify that the bearer hereof, Mr. Joseph Bullein Cook, who is a member in full union and communion with us, has been called by us, on trial, to the exercise of his gifts in publicly preaching the word of God; and has obtained such approbation from his hearers in general as induces us to encourage

he was not insensible to the claims of missionary labor, and had an ear open to the Macedonian cry of the destitute. It was his happiness to serve a church that seconded the enlarged desires and liberal views of his own mind. An inviting field of ministerial labor was now open in Georgetown ; whither he made periodical visits, spending some weeks and administering the ordinances. His labor was not in vain in the Lord. Several were baptized at successive periods ; and in the month of June, 1794, a church was constituted there with thirty-six members, who had previously been reckoned members of this church. His periodical absences, while he lived, though they caused a privation to the church, were cheerfully acceded to, not only as tending to his own refreshment, so necessary in this climate ; but, as contributing to refresh the spirits of God's destitute people, in the regions through which he passed. To his benevolent activity is to be traced the baptism of some white persons and a large number of colored people, since 1807,\* on Edisto Island ; and also, in a great measure, the gathering of the churches of Goose Creek, and Mount Olivet, constituted in 1812. At

his going on in the public exercise of those gifts, which we trust God has conferred on him for the ministry, and for usefulness in his church ; and we do hereby recommend him to the attention and respect of those churches and people, whom, in the course of Divine Providence, he may visit, for the exercise of his gifts among them.

Done at a meeting of the church, this 3d day of March, 1799, and signed in behalf of the whole.

RICHARD FURMAN, Pastor,  
 THOMAS RIVERS, Deacon.  
 HENRY JONES, Clerk.  
 SAMUEL RIVERS,  
 JAMES LAWSON,  
 JAMES AUWRIGHT,  
 HENRY B. INGLESBY."

\* February 9, 1824. The church passed a resolve authorising Dr. Furman to visit Edisto Island as often as once a month, if he could do so with convenience to himself.



Edisto, a neat wooden building was put up and completely furnished with every thing desirable for the orderly and decent arrangement of the house of God, by the extraordinary energy of a female, Mrs. Hephzibah Townsend; who, until March 1829, continued a member of this church. The place was first opened for worship, and dedicated to the service of God, with a sermon, by Dr. Furman, May 23, 1818.

It has, perhaps, never fallen to the lot of any congregation, to be long and entirely free from discontented and restless spirits; who merge almost every consideration of courtesy, prudence, gratitude, and good order, in a mistaken zeal for the fancies of a moment. Dr. Furman, like his predecessor, did not escape what usually falls to the lot of those ministers who have long and faithfully served the same people. About the year 1794, an attempt was made by a few persons connected with the congregation, to induce a very popular clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Staughton, then a young man, recently arrived from England, to settle in Charleston; and hints were not obscurely given of a desire to have him made Co-Pastor of the church. But the more staid and reflecting portion of the congregation frowned indignantly on the effort; and the consummate prudence, and varied excellencies of Dr. Furman, displayed on this trying occasion, gave him even a stronger hold than before on the estimation of all parties; and no similar trouble ever after occurred.

In the year 1795, December 31, the Rev. Mr. Hart, for thirty years Pastor of this church, ended his useful life, at Hopewell, N. J. The church here, in grateful memory of his services, requested their Pastor to preach a funeral sermon for him. This was done by Dr. Furman, February 7, 1796, and the sermon was published.

With such a seer at their head, who "had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do," it

might be expected that the church would stand prepared for the progressive dawn of the millennial day, even as "they that watch for the morning." With the commencement of the present century, *Christian charity* has come forth on her errand of mercy, more fruitful in enterprise, more ready in self-denial, more abundant in labors, than in the generations that have gone by ;—she now stands at that point of advancement, toward the end of her course, whence all the kingdoms of the earth can be distinctly surveyed ; and God, our Saviour, bids her claim the teeming wastes as her own. We have fallen on the times which prophets and holy men desired to see ; and to be a consistent Christian of the nineteenth century, a true child of *charity* at this dawn of a better day, requires a reach of vision, a liberality of feeling and of action, guided and chastened indeed by truth, yet expanded to a degree correspondent to the crisis.

To the sovereign grace of God this church owes the happiness and honor of having stood ready to meet the opening indications of Providence, in regard to the advancement of Messiah's kingdom. The *Quarterly Concert* of prayer, which had been adopted in some places, both in England and America, on the suggestion of President Edwards, engaged the attention of this church ; and in 1795 it was recommended to all the churches of the Association. It was observed on the first Tuesdays in January, April, July, and October ; but as this fell into disuse about 1810, the church soon after set up the *Monthly Concert* of prayer, on the first Monday evening in every month, which had been first established by our brethren in England of the Nottingham Association, June 3, 1784. The union of the church with the Independent and Presbyterian denominations in this city, in the support of that meeting, is of more recent date.

But they have not contented themselves with good desires and supplications only ;—"their prayers and their

alms together have gone up for a memorial before God." In the year 1800, the church sent to the Association the following query, viz. "Is there not at this time, a call in providence for our churches to make the most serious exertions, in union with other Christians of various denominations, to send the gospel among the heathen; or to such people who, though living in countries where the gospel revelation is known, do not enjoy a standing ministry, and the regular administration of divine ordinances among them?"

This query drew forth an animating response from the Association; and the missionary excitement produced by it, among the churches, led them to adopt, as the field of their labor, the remnant of the tribe of Catawba Indians, located on both sides of the Catawba River, in York and Lancaster districts, S. C. In 1802, the Rev. John Rooker was appointed Missionary, with a designation to those people, and continued in the immediate superintendence of the mission and its schools, until 1817; when, from the diminution of the tribe, their being so entirely surrounded by the habitations and churches of the whites, and their own wandering habits, it was judged inexpedient longer to continue the mission. To this enterprise, while it was sustained, this church contributed their full proportion; and also to all those missionary objects which, since the year 1813, have begun to gain extensively upon the attention of the American Baptists. For proof of this, we need only refer to the minutes of its various societies, and the records of the General Committee.

The Sunday School Institution received the early attention and countenance of the church. Formerly it had been the custom of the Pastor to catechise the children of the congregation, semi-annually, in a public manner.—This exercise was conducted in a manner so edifying, and yet so fatherly and attractive, that it was, at once, a

source of profit and of pleasure to the young : and many of you who now hear me can recollect with what enthusiasm you prepared your catechetical exercise, and with what exultation you hailed the approach of the honored day, when you could stand up before your father and friend, and repeat your well-conned answers, and receive his smile of approbation ; when clinging to his gown, (the exercise being ended,) you would retire with him to partake of his cheerful collation.

But when the more efficient system of Sunday School instruction was introduced, this ancient custom was gradually laid aside.

In the year 1819, anxious to see the objects of education and missions more generally patronised among their brethren in the State, the church sent up to the Association a notice and recommendation of a plan, which had been digested by their Pastor, to secure the more general co-operation of the churches ; which was accompanied by the draft of a serious address to the other Associations. Simultaneously, a query, relating to the same subject, was presented by the church at the High Hills of Santee. This was the commencement of those measures which led to a meeting of Delegates at Columbia, in December, 1821, at which the State Convention of the Baptist Denomination in South Carolina was formed. Of this body, its objects and efforts, time alone must speak.

In the year 1821, Mr. Robert Missildine, a native of England, having exercised the gift of exhortation and prayer to the satisfaction of the members, was called into the work of the ministry. He appeared before the church, July 23, 1821, and stated his impressions, and his desire to preach the gospel, and he was accordingly licensed on that day. He was ordained as an Evangelist at the request of the church, by the ministers composing the board of Home Missions, who had employed him, in May, 1823;

and, in November of that year, was installed Pastor of the Bethel church, Sumter district, S. C. He has since removed his residence to the State of Ohio.

About this period, the church had the gratification of witnessing the erection of a new edifice for public worship. This had been meditated as early as 1805, when the Rev. Dr. Furman presented the church with a tract of land in St. Paul's Parish, then deemed to be worth \$1000, to be appropriated to this object at a convenient time.

In the course of the next ten years, other and important aids were received; particularly a lot in Hampstead, the bequest of Mr. William M. Turner, in 1807, afterwards sold to Thomas Raine. The "Religious Society," formed in 1775, becoming extinct in 1810, had provided that its funds, in that event, should belong to the Baptist church. From these, the church realized £965 11 1. With these and other available means, estimated in all at about \$7000, the congregation began, in 1815, to augment the amount by subscriptions, which were industriously circulated, both by themselves and some benevolent friends in other denominations, and met with liberal patronage from a generous community. Means to the amount of more than \$20,000 having been furnished, they proceeded to appoint a building committee, October 22, 1817, consisting of William Rouse, George Gibbs, Richard B. Furman, Tristram Tupper, and James Nolan, with all necessary powers; and, meanwhile, efforts were still used to increase the funds. For various reasons, the commencement of the work was retarded until 1819. On September 19, 1819, the foundation being laid, the corner stone, enclosing proper documents, &c., was laid under the south east corner of the building, by the hands of the venerable Pastor, with appropriate exercises and solemn prayer. Under the judicious and tasteful plan adopted by the

committee, and by their exemplary vigilance and faithfulness, the building rose rapidly, and was completed in the following year.\*

The last sabbath which the church spent in the old building they had occupied so long, will never be forgotten by those who witnessed the solemn services. In the evening, Dr. Furman, deeply penetrated with the varied reflections which the occasion inspired, and scarcely able to command himself, took leave of the consecrated spot, with sobbing and many tears; the feelings of the flock were scarcely less intense than his own; and the place of their pasture was now literally a Bochim, a place of weepers. On the Thursday morning following, viz: January 17, 1822, the new building was first opened for worship, and dedicated to the service of Almighty God, with a sermon from the Rev. Dr. Furman. The text used on this occasion was, 2 Chron. 6, 8. Shortly after this enlargement of the accommodations of worship, the hearts of the members were also enlarged. While the church had enjoyed a steady onward progress all through the ministry of Dr. Furman, various seasons of refreshing had occurred at intervals; never marked by extraordinary excitement, but always bearing a genial, heavenly influence: and now it pleased God to raise up a goodly number of willing converts, to take their proper places amid the maturer fruits of his past labours;—the church at this period appearing like the variegated scenery, the promontories and the recesses of an indented shore, standing out to receive the last mellow rays of the setting sun, and remain a living landscape of spiritual verdure, lighted and adorned by his instrumentality.

While this revival was in progress, the church received two ministers into its membership, the Rev. Cyrus Pitt Grosvenor, and the Rev. Daniel Sheppard. The former

\* The pulpit, which cost about \$1000, was built by the subscription of the Ladies.

had come from Massachusetts, under a commission from the trustees of Amherst College, to forward its interests at the south ; but under a conscientious change of sentiments on the subject of baptism, he was constrained to leave the independent congregational connexion for the Baptist. He was baptized and received into the fellowship of the church, May 18, 1823. The latter had come on a mission from the State of New Jersey, and joined this church by letter. Both were ordained as Evangelists, on Monday, May 19, 1823, by Mr. Brantly and Dr. Furman. Mr. Grosvenor preached a sermon on occasion of his baptism, giving the reasons of his change of sentiment, which was published ; and after spending some time with the Georgetown church as Pastor, returned to the north, and is now the Pastor of the second Baptist church in Salem, Massachusetts. Mr. Sheppard remains as Pastor of the Goose Creek church.

This ordination is the last event of moment on your records, until the mournful catastrophe with which this history must close.

The firm and vigorous health which your honored Pastor had ever enjoyed, had kept out of view, in a great measure, the consideration of his mortality. But the time drew near when the servant of the Lord should die. His uncommon labours in the cause of suffering humanity, in the calamitous season of 1824, laid the foundation of a disease from which he never recovered. He visited the Association and Convention, in the close of that year ; and having imparted to his brethren, with more than usual copiousness and solemnity, his latest counsels, he took an affectionate leave of them, expressing his apprehension that he should see them no more. Returning to the bosom of his family, his agonized frame, and his altered appearance, and all the dread ravages of disease, soon issued the summons to gather about him and see him die. The church who felt as one large family beneath his paternal care, assembled

daily, and offered up prayers and cries, without ceasing, for his restoration. He had preached his last sermon. Like him whose walk he then described, he had "walked with God," and it might almost be said of him even while living, "he was not, for God took him." His spirit lived on high; not in the raptures, but in the solid hopes of faith. When any of his congregation came about him, they saw, that, though in other respects scarce a vestige of the world could be discerned, while his spirit was staying on God at the banks of the Jordan, a concern for their spiritual welfare had been so deeply traced on his mind, that even the hand of death could not erase it. To such he would, faltering, say, "I am a dying man; but my trust is in the Redeemer. I preach Christ to you, dying, as I have attempted to do whilst living: I commend Christ and his salvation to you." "Just before he expired, he requested the 23d Psalm to be read; and whilst this delightful portion of scripture was imparting its balm to his listenings pirit, he flew away, as on the wings of a dove, to be at rest." He died on the night of the 25th of August, A. D. 1825.

*Farewell—Farewell—Thou Man of God!*



# APPENDIX.

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## A BRIEF MEMOIR OF THE REV. C. O. SCREVEN ;

BY REV. J. S. LAW.

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The Rev. Charles Odingsell Screven, great grand-son of William Screven, was the son of Gen. James Screven, who was shot during the Revolution by a party of Tories and Indians near Medway Meeting House, in Liberty county, Georgia. He was born in the year 1774 ; and in February, 1786, when twelve years of age, he was baptized in Charleston, by Dr. Furman, and connected himself with the Baptist Church in that place. As the subject of this memoir has left no journal or record of himself, it will be necessary to pass from his uniting himself to the church, to the year 1802, when, having finished his studies at Brown University, Providence, R. I., he came to Sunbury in Liberty county, and commenced preaching. About the latter part of this year, or the commencement of the year 1803, he visited Charleston, and was ordained there by Dr. Furman. Somewhere about the same time, he was married to a widow lady by the name of Jones, who was a Miss Barnard, of the family of Barnards in Savannah. By this wife he had one child, a son ; who is now a man of family, residing in Sunbury, and a member of the church there. He was soon called to have his confidence in God tested in giving up his beloved partner, who died in the latter part of the year 1804. This severe affliction seemed to be sent to prepare his soul more thoroughly for the arduous work in which he was engaged. He commenced his labors in Sunbury, under the most trying and disheartening circumstances. There was not a single Baptist in the place : another denomination occupied the ground. Morals were exceedingly low, and the people desperately wicked. The church there, and the world, seemed bent upon driving him, by their opposition, from the place. But his language was, in the midst of all their opposition, " Wo unto me if I preach not the gospel !" He continued his labors there ; and his Heavenly Father soon encouraged him to persevere, by

giving him a few souls as seals to his ministry. He soon constituted a church, and the Lord continued to bless him in his labors. Many, who were at first opposed to him, became his spiritual children; and others laid aside their opposition, and became members of his congregation.— Thus, by an affectionate and simple exhibition of truth, he was instrumental in turning many from darkness to light; and by his consistent, christian deportment, he disarmed others of their enmity and prejudice against him. But he confined not his labors to Sunbury; the neighboring county heard the glad tidings from his lips: and no doubt the glorified souls of many poor negroes and white men are at this time shining as stars in the bright crown that encircles his brow. In the year 1813, he was married to the present Mrs. Barbara R. Screven; by whom he had several children. Of these, three are still living. At this time, he was afflicted with the disease in his eye which terminated his life. From 1802 to 1821, though he suffered severely from his diseased eye, yet his labors were uninterrupted. From 1821 to the time of his dissolution, his increasing affliction necessarily interrupted his faithful labors. As a Pastor, he was tender, affectionate, and faithful to his people; ever striving to show himself a pattern in all things. As a preacher, he was sound, urgent, and instructive. In consequence of the diseased state of his eye, he seldom wrote; but when he did, he evinced much strength of mind and power of reasoning. As a master, he was kind and humane to his servants. His honored widow says, she never saw him chastise a servant; he always counselled them, as friends who had distressed him. As a lover of souls, as a submissive Christian under affliction, and as an affectionate husband and father, let me give the testimony of his widowed partner, who held affectionate converse with him seventeen years. As stated above, they were married in the year 1813, and at this time he was afflicted with the disease which terminated his life. It was, even then, very painful and distressing to him; so much so as to disturb his rest. But, she says, for seventeen years she never heard him use one expression of repining against the dealings of God towards him. The disease was, for many years, slow in its progress; but, for six years before he died, his eye became exceedingly distressing. He would often sit up for hours at night in great agony, unable to find relief from any thing. When his beloved wife would remark upon the severity of his suffering, he would reply, “ Ah, my dear! it is just as it should be; I desire that the will of God should be done with me.” Such submissive language as this was often expressed by him. His friends and physicians often advised him to give up preaching, and go to other places and try and find some cure for his malady.— He once went to Savannah, and once to Philadelphia, but obtained no permanent relief from his visits. He was devoted to the interests of the church; and nothing could induce him to relinquish preaching, as long as he was able to speak for God. He sometimes thought he ought to give up his charge of the church, because he was not able to fulfil the

duties of a Pastor in visiting among his people ; which he often lamented. He twice resolved to give up his charge of the church ; but his brethren did not appear willing to give him up, as long as there was a prospect of his being restored. His beloved wife says, she has seen him bowed down and in great distress, and upon inquiring into the cause, fearing he was in great pain from his eye, his answer would be, " Oh poor, perishing souls ! my heart bleeds to think how many are going down to the chambers of woe and despair ; and even here, in this little place, many are in the road to eternal misery." Thus did this devoted servant of God show, that though he had bodily pain enough to engross all his feelings, yet he had a soul that could and did weep over perishing men. He would frequently say, " I think my work is done in Sunbury ; I must go to some other place, and give way to some one more useful ; but how can I leave these brethren ? They are dear to me." He was indeed bound to the church by tender ties ; for although he has repeatedly said, that he did not know if one soul was converted by the means of his preaching ; yet, he had baptized them, and the church had grown up under his care. He has been known to come home from church after having excommunicated some of the colored members, and weep in his room for the remainder of the afternoon, and be in great heaviness. Such seasons always caused him much bodily pain, for it always increased the inflammation of his eye, and deprived him of sleep at night ; but he seldom spared himself. He was an affectionate husband and fond father, and he manifested his parental affection in the deep, heart-felt interest he took in the spiritual interest of his children.— Though he was a most affectionate father, yet when his Lord was pleased to call from his bosom those whom he tenderly loved, he was submissive ; and when three of his dear children were taken away from him in one week, he was more than submissive,—he seemed to give them up cheerfully to the call of his Master. We now approach the period when he took his last leave of his dear church, no more to behold them on this side the grave.

When he was advised to visit New-York, he said he would go because his friends wished it, and he valued their advice ; and he also said, he should leave home without the least expectation of ever returning to it. The evening before he left, his black people came to bid him farewell. It was a truly affecting scene. They appeared overwhelmed with grief. He was in an agony of distress ; he said he felt as though he were parting with his own dear children. The next morning he and his beloved partner bid farewell to their dear friends. He suffered much on his way to Savannah ; and, for several days while there, he was not able to speak without great pain. But whenever he did speak, it was to bless the Lord for all his mercies to him. He bore his passage to the north with the greatest submission, and even cheerfulness at times. His temple, which had also become diseased, bled twice on the voyage, so much as to alarm his wife. On discovering her distress, he said to her, " You

must not be distressed or alarmed, for I am in the hands of the Lord, who has ever watched over me with loving kindness and tender mercies ; and all he lays upon me is for my good." They arrived in New-York the twelfth day after they sailed. When he took leave of the Captain of the ship, he said, "Farewell, Captain ; I shall never meet you on earth again, but we shall meet in another world. May my Heavenly Father draw you to his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and give you a place in his Kingdom !" When they arrived at their lodgings which had been previously provided for them by a kind christian friend, he appeared to get more comfortable, in a day or two, than he had been since he left home. The Doctor, who was to attend him, called the same day he arrived ; but declined making the application of his salve until the inflammation in his eye had subsided. He however made an emollient application for several days, which was of very great service to him ; so much so, as to excite in Mrs. Screven very great hopes of his recovery. When the first severe plaster was applied, he said it was much less painful than he expected ; and when, after six days, it was taken off, the effect produced by the plaster made the prospect of his recovery still more encouraging. The Doctor said that his constitution was so much broken down by his long affliction that he did not wish to make an application of the drawing salve to his eye, and therefore thought the poultices should be continued. He would often entreat his wife not to indulge any sanguine hopes of his recovery, for he did not expect to reach his home again. He said, if it were his Lord's will, he was willing and satisfied to die even among strangers. He was able to speak but very little ; for his teeth were almost closed. He could take no nourishment, but soup, or something of that kind. His appetite left him, and his strength began to fail. His bowels became the seat of his disorder, and his throat became so sore that he swallowed with difficulty. Every thing was done for him that could be done. He had two Physicians attending him besides the cancer Doctor. They all treated him with great kindness ; and they observed that they never had witnessed, before, so much christian patience and resignation.—Whenever he could speak, it was to praise God for his mercies ; and he would sometimes break forth in an ecstasy, and speak of the love of God to a perishing and rebellious world. He would thank God for the gift of his dear Son Jesus Christ ; and that he had been brought, through grace, to take refuge in the Saviour of sinners. He would say to his wife, "Oh, my dear ! how good is the Lord ! You know not how much mercy is displayed toward me in all my affliction ; you do not know how much corruption and sin there is in my heart to be subdued. My righteous Lord doth all things well ; put your trust in the Lord, and he will support you under every trial." Mrs. Screven says, the day before his departure for a better world, she was sitting by his bedside while he appeared to be in a profound sleep ; but she thought his sleep did not appear natural, and it occurred to her that he might be nearer

his end than she had supposed. She was very much overcome with the apprehension ; and when he roused up, he saw that she was distressed, and said to her, " My dearest love, do not afflict yourself ; I feel better now, much better ; perhaps I may live some days yet ; but you *will* be called to pass through this trial : stay your soul on God, lean on the arm of Jesus, He is a sure support in every time of need. I am fixed on the Rock, Christ Jesus." She observed, " I know you will be happy, I know that Christ will receive you." He answered, " His righteousness is all my trust ; my only hope of salvation is in the merits of his blood." Mrs. Screven regrets much, her having discouraged his talking, inasmuch as it was painful to him ; but she could not believe that he was so near his end, nor did he think the parting hour was so near. The Sabbath previous to this time he was very weak and drowsy all day ; for he had taken a great deal of the " black drop," the evening before. He roused up quite late in the evening, and asked " Is this Tuesday, my dear ?" She told him, " no ; that it was the Lord's day." He raised himself up, and said, " Is it possible I have spent all this precious Sabbath on my back,—the day which saw my Lord rise from the tomb ?" But he would soon relapse into a sound sleep, to all appearances. He began, about this time, to be a little wandering in his mind ; and would frequently speak of home, of the church, of the servants, of the children, and of his wife. When she would ask him what he said, he would reply, that it was only in his wanderings that he could think he was at home. Mrs. Screven states, in the afternoon of the last day he was with her upon earth, she went to apply a poultice to his eye : he had always, previous to this time, assisted her in making the application ; but on this occasion he laid perfectly helpless. She could not refrain from weeping ; and when she had finished making the application, she sobbed aloud, not supposing that it could disturb him. Her sobs however did arouse him, and he began immediately to praise God, and entreat her not to be afflicted ; but to make Christ her refuge, and to remember their dear children and bring them up for God. He again became very drowsy, and spoke but little through the night ; though he had his senses to his very last breath. The lady with whom they lodged watched with Mrs. Screven, a part of this night. When she came in, Mrs. Screven, knowing his dislike to having strangers in his room, and fearing he might wake up and see her suddenly, spoke to him, and told him that Mrs. M. had come in to sit awhile with her. He spoke affectionately to her, and inquired after her health, and her family. She asked him how he felt ? He replied, " Quite easy ; much better than I deserve, but God is very good to me." He observed farther to her, very calmly, " The tabernacle is nearly dissolved ; but we are assured from the word of truth, that we have a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens." His affectionate wife sat by his bed all night, giving him his nourishment and medicine. Whenever she would awake him for the purpose, he would entreat her in the most

affectionate manner to go to bed, telling her that she would be entirely worn out, and would feel her fatigue when it was all over. He said the Lord was with him. Of this she had consoling evidence, from his frequently calling upon the Lord as his righteousness, his precious Saviour; and his speaking of him as his strength and Redeemer. There never was the least indication of a fear of death; or even of a wish to remain on earth. He would shed tears when he saw his fond wife distressed; or when his dear children would come around him, particularly his youngest, his little Benjamin, he would press him to his bosom, and kiss him, and say, "My God! thy will be done!" The night before the morning of his departure, he complained of numbness in his feet and legs. Just at the dawning of the day on Friday morning, Mrs. Screven heard him sigh; she approached his bed and asked him how he felt.—He replied, if it were not for excessive weakness, he could say, he felt very well; for he had no pain at all. She saw very plainly that there was a very great change in him, and that he was rapidly approaching his end. She called to Mrs. M. in the next room, and the family very soon assembled. He fixed his dying eyes upon his dear partner and said, "My dear, I am going; all will soon be over." She asked him if he felt Christ precious: he replied, "oh yes," and breathed his last, without the least struggle or apparent pain, in about three minutes after. His emancipated spirit took its flight about six o'clock Friday morning, 2d of July, 1830—aged fifty-seven years. "O how precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints!" The sainted Screven now "rests from his labors, and his works do follow him;"—works that shall endure when the proudest monuments of earthly greatness shall have passed away—works that shall remain before the throne of the eternal, as fruits of his untiring zeal in the cause of his Saviour.

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#### LETTERS OF REV. WILLIAM SCREVEN.

Some Letters of William Screven were preserved by the Historian, Mr. Isaac Backus, from among the papers of the first Baptist Church, in Boston. When Mr. Backus was applied to by Colonel Thomas Screven, in 1796, for such memorials of his great-grand-father, as might be in his possession, he transmitted the following copies, which are thought worthy of an insertion here.

*"To Mr. Ellis Callender, at Boston, in New England.*

JAMESTON, in South Carolina, June 2, 1707.

To the Church of Christ at Boston, your old christian friend saluteth you in our dear Lord; wishing you all grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dearly Beloved—This may inform you that I have many thoughts of heart about you, and am much concerned for you; and I hope I can say, my prayers are to God for you, though I am not with you, nor can

I come to you, as I was inclined to do if I could ; our help being taken from us : for our Minister that came from England is dead, and I can by no means be spared. I must say, 'tis a great loss, and to me a great disappointment ; but the will of the Lord is done, and in his will I must be satisfied. I pray the Lord to sanctify all his dispensations ; especially such awful ones as this is to us, and to me especially. I do not now see how I can be helpful to you, otherwise than in my prayers to God for you, or in writing to you. The Lord help us to pity one another in our affliction as the Gospel counselleth, if one member be afflicted all mourn. I pray the Lord help us that we may do so ; for surely it concerneth the churches of Christ, being members of the same body, to sympathize with one another in their afflictions. And now, my dear friends, my counsel and advice to you is, that for as much as you are destitute of a Minister of your own, in the same faith and order of the Gospel, (if you are not supplied since I last heard from you, by my dear brother Callender's letter,) that you keep together nevertheless, and that you keep up your meetings ; otherwise you will give a great step to the losing of the cause, and give the adversary occasion to rejoice : for how fair soever they carry it to you, they are expecting your dissolution or coming to nothing—the which I pray God forbid.

It is my heart's desire that you might thrive and grow in grace, and abound in every good work, to the glory and praise of God. I have longed to hear that were you supplied with an able Minister that might break the bread of life among you ; but if the Lord do not think meet to supply you in the way you have expected, your way will be to improve your own gifts, you have among you in the Church. Brother Callender, and brother Joseph Russell whom I was well acquainted with, I know have gifts that may tend to the church's edification, if improved. I think you should call one, or both of them to it ; and if either should refuse, except on weighty good grounds, I do not see how they can answer it. I would have you remember that God hath all along carried on his work among you, by such persons and means as were despicable in the eye of the world ; therefore I desire you to improve the gifts you have, if possibly you can persuade to it, and be thankful and content. It may be, 'tis that God looks for from you ; and our God is abundantly able to supply all your wants by Jesus Christ. And I hope he will be found of you in the way of your duty, and increase both your gifts and graces. I shall be glad to hear from you, and of your prosperity, and how all my old friends do, especially brother Hull, Sweetser, and Hillier, and indeed all the rest. I shall be glad to hear how it is with you, with respect to the Indians.

My kind love, with my wife's, to you all. In haste, I rest your constant remembrancer, assured friend, and christian brother, in Gospel Bonds.

WILLIAM SCREVEN.

*To Mr. Ellis Callender, in Boston, in New-England, this present.*

My Dear Brother—My christian love, with my wife's, presented to you and your wife ; hoping and earnestly desiring your prosperity in all spiritual and temporal blessings. This may inform you that I received yours of the 25th of August last, in which you inform me of the state of New-England. I am much concerned for New England in general, because of the great afflictions God hath laid upon it. I know it hath been very great also. That there should be such a spirit of infatuation on the spirits of your forces as to go to Port-Royal, and not so much as ask it, as you tell me, is unaccountable, and so it is indeed. But what shall we say to these things? It is the Lord who doth all that he pleaseth in the Heavens and Earth. But, my dear brother, give me leave to tell you, that although all our sins are great, and every one ought to cry to God for pardon, and New-England is guilty of many sins, I cannot but think that the sin of persecution is one, if not the chief, for which God is thus contending with them. For you know how it hath been. But I hope the Lord hath a peculiar people there, for whose sake, or at least for his mercy's sake, he will not have New-England under the cruel stroke of a cruel enemy. I pray God to grant a thorough reformation ; then may you and we expect deliverance from all our troubles.

As to your particular church state, I am more concerned, as a member of the same body with you ; that the cause is so low with you, that your endeavors to obtain a Minister from England are disappointed, and that there is none stirred up among you, seems to me to be very sad. And indeed it is sad with a people when there is no open vision ; and indeed, with respect to the administration of ordinances according to our faith and order, it is so with you though your meeting be upheld by one of a contrary mind. I pray God to pity your case, for his mercy's sake. I doubt not but 'tis your prayer, and I hope it shall be mine, that he will send forth labourers into his vineyard, and so in his due time supply you. In the meantime, I pray the God of all grace to support your spirits under all your exercises, that when you have been tried, (for this is a trying time for you,) you may come forth as gold out of the fire, being more purified, and so more meet for your great Master's use. I am concerned to think of your loss of that good friend you tell me of ; that when you had some hope of help all should become dark, as in that solemn providence it was to you. But O my brother, what a depth is there in Divine Providence ! His works are past finding out. The Lord grant us such grace that we may lie low at his feet, and say, just and right are thy ways, O thou King of Saints ! Our congregation here are, I think, growing in health, and I hope thriving in grace ; blessed be the Lord ! I can't enlarge, but I pray you to present my kind love to brother Hillier and his wife, brother John Russell and his wife, and my dear sister Procter, and brother Sweetser ; and the rest of our friends which to me may be unknown. I shall be glad to hear from you by every opportu-



nity, and hope I shall give you to know how we do. So wishing you well, desiring your prayers, I commend you to the grace of God, and subscribe myself your christian brother in the best of bonds.

WILLIAM SCREVEN.

Charleston, in Carolina, February 10, 1707—8.

*To Mr. Ellis Callender, &c.*

CHARLESTON, in Carolina, August 6, 1708.

My Dear Brother—I salute you, and your dear wife and family ; praying all suitable grace and favor may be communicated to you, for your spiritual and temporal supplies, from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. This may inform you that I received yours of June 12th, for which I thank you, and of which I am glad. I heard of your sickness, and that you were like to die, if not dead ; therefore I sent my last to brother Hillier ; but am glad the Lord hath raised you up from the gates of death ; I hope, for his own glory, his church's and your own good. I rejoice that you are inclined to, and employed in, the blessed work of the Lord, for the support of his cause, and the comfort of his saints left of that poor languishing church with you ; as it must and will be, if you have the blessed ordinances of the holy Jesus among you again. I am glad you have reason to hope the cause hath gained some credit, among some who did judge too hardly of-us ; but am grieved to hear of such a censorious spirit in any of those that bear the name by which we are called among men. I pray God to be with your spirit, and strengthen you to the great work to which you are called, and that the little vine may be flourishing under your hand. I hope it will make both you and me glad, you may assure yourself my heart hath been with you, and should have been glad to have come over to your help if I could ; but I hope I can say that I have not forgotten to pray for our Mother Sion, or her daughters our sister churches, but more especially you, of whom I count myself a poor unworthy member. I have been, of late, brought very low by sickness ; but I bless the Lord I was helped to preach and administer the communion last Lord's day, but am still very weak ; therefore can write but a little to you now. I want to know who of our friends with you are dead since I left you. Our Society are, for the most part I think, in health, and I hope thriving in grace. We are about ninety in all. I shall be glad to hear from you by all opportunities, and to hear of the thriving of the church with you. My dear love to brother Russell, and brother Hillier and their good wives, and sister Proctor, and the whole church with you.

So commending you and yours, and all your great concerns to the Lord and the blessing of his grace, desiring your prayers, promising you mine, I rest your brother and fellow-laborer in the best of services, for the best rewards.

WILLIAM SCREVEN.

## ANSWERS TO DOCTOR RAMSAY'S QUERIES, RESPECTING THE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

BY THE REV. RICHARD FURMAN, D. D.

ANSWER 1st and 2nd. The Baptist Church of Charleston, appears to have been the first of that denomination which was formed in South Carolina. By the loss of their original records, in the great hurricane of 1752, the church are deprived of the principal source, from whence they might derive information respecting the time of their constitution, and other important events of that early day; but, from a variety of evidence, there is reason to believe they were constituted into a Church state, about the year 1685. Their first seat of worship was at Somerton; but in a little time it was exchanged for Charleston. At Charleston, they for some time assembled at a house in King street; but before the year 1700, they had built the house now called the old Baptist Church, and the parsonage connected with it. This Church or Congregation, was composed of three small colonies, two from Great Britain, and one from the Province of Maine, in New England. Those from Britain came, one with the Lord Cardross; the other with Mr. Blake, whose wife and her mother, the Lady Axtell, were members; that from New England came with the Rev. William Screven; who, according to the best information received, was the first pastor of this Church. It is not known that those from Britain suffered any other oppression or inconvenience, previous to their emigration, than what was common to Dissenters there. Mr. Screven had, as a Baptist, been fined and imprisoned for preaching, by the government of Massachusetts; and, under severe penalties, forbidden to preach any more, either in public, or at his own house; and required to attend worship in the church government approved. He appears to have been a man of piety and zeal, and of respectable abilities; and to have adhered to the confession of faith, which was then, as it is now, considered as the standard of Orthodoxy among the Calvinistic Baptists. He was the proprietor of Georgetown, (a street of which bears his name;) by him it was laid out in lots; and of these, he gave one of two acres for an Episcopal Church, one of an acre for a Presbyterian, one of the same size for a Baptist Church, and another for a Work House. He died at an advanced age, and was buried at Georgetown. It is understood that he came to South Carolina, about the time the Church of which he was pastor was constituted. His fining, imprisonment, and prohibition from preaching, by the Massachusetts General Court, took place in 1682.\*

ANSWER 3d. It is not known, particularly, what state the Baptist Church here was in, in the year 1703, nor what part its members took in the disputes respecting a religious establishment by law; but as the denomination were at that time the strenuous asserters of religious liberty, and opposers of such ecclesiastical establishments, both in Old and New-England, it is not reasonable to think that those in South Carolina,

\* See Backus's History.

avored the establishment here ; especially when they knew that by it they would be oppressed. By a letter Mr. Screven wrote to the Baptist Church in Boston, in the year 1707, it appears that the communicants in his Church at that time amounted to ninety ; and that a minister, who had come from England to be his assistant, had died. At an early day, a Baptist Church was formed at Ashley River, of which Rev. Mr. Chanler, father of the late Doctor Chanler, was many years pastor. Another was formed on Edisto Island, where Rev. Mr. Tilley, was minister. These originated from the Church in Charleston ; but it is believed they were not considered as distinct Churches, during the life of Mr. Screven. It is highly probable, however, that at these and other places, particularly at Stono, and the lower parts of Black River, public worship was occasionally, if not regularly, supported.

ANSWER 4th. The Arian, or Socinian Church, (or as it has been called, according to a well known distinction in England, the General Baptists; under which character Arminians and Universalists, as well as Arians and Socinians are included,) had its origin in the speculations of Mr. William Elliott, who, when a young man, was thought by his friends, and probably by himself, to have been a man of superior genius and discernment, as well as of piety. He was a member of the original Baptist Church in Charleston ; and about the year 1730 embraced principles which the Church did not approve ; and had the address to draw his father the elder Mr. William Elliot, and several others, into his sentiments and measures. Being opposed by the Church, they withdrew from it, and united in a separate Congregation, which held its seat of worship and government by Rantoles Bridge, at Stono, in a house of worship which had been built some years before, and is understood to have been the property of the original church in Charleston. Their constitution at this place, according to a manuscript history, by Morgan Edwards, A. M., took place in the year 1735 or 6. Soon after their withdrawing or exclusion from the church in Charleston, they sent to England, and obtained a Mr. Ingram for their minister. He lived but a few years ; but they soon obtained, after his death, from England also, a Mr. Heywood, who lived a considerable time among them. The first of these was said to have been little, if anything, more than an Arminian ; the other was a Socinian and Universalist, and made but little pretensions to piety ; but was esteemed as a man of parts and erudition. The General Baptists were most numerous and popular in Charleston, in his day. After his death they rapidly declined. A Mr. Wheeler and a Mr. Evans were Ministers of this church in succession afterwards, but preached to small congregations. At the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, the church was considered as nearly extinct. And in the year 1787, the incorporated Baptist Church in Charleston, after inquiry, considered them as really extinct. To this church was the donation made of the land lying above the Charleston Orphan House, as it is said, by the elder Mr. William Elliot.

ANSWER 5th. When the Episcopal Establishment was done away, or religious liberty regularly established, there were in this State about thirty Baptist Churches, some of them numerous, and most of them had several branches. By these branches are meant bodies of members, who lived at a distance from the main body of the Church to which they belonged. These often were found possessed of houses for worship, at which large congregations assembled. Fourteen of these churches belonged to the Charleston Association; some of them had not been united to any Association; and the rest were included in the Congaree Association. These last in the course of the war became disunited. There were, besides those enumerated above, some Baptists who held to the seventh day sabbath; and others called Dunkards, or Tunkers, who wore their beards, and held to non-resistance and Universalism.

The Charleston Association consisted of those who were called regular Baptists, adhering to the confession of faith. The Congaree, of separate Baptists, who were derived from the separate Presbyterians, or Congregationalists of New England. These bore some resemblance to the Quakers in the peculiarities of dress, mode of speaking, and manner of conducting public worship; the private members, and even women, being allowed to pray and exhort in the church, when deeply impressed with religious subjects; it being believed by them that such persons then acted under an impulse of the Divine Spirit. Several of these churches, under the influence of a Mr. James Childs, who styled himself an Evangelist, and claimed a power to regulate the churches, early in the American war, embraced the principle of non-resistance, and proved disaffected to the country; but a considerable part of them, and the whole of those who were united in the Charleston Association, were among the most zealous supporters of American measures. The disaffected were situated between the waters of Broad River and Saluda.

ANSWER 6th. It is not known that the Baptists suffered any oppression of moment, but such as was common to Dissenters, during the time of Episcopal Establishment in this State; at least not in a direct manner from authority. From individuals, in their private capacity, they frequently encountered opposition, censure, and obloquy; and most generally from the ignorant, bigotted, adherents of the Establishment, who, in the pride of their supposed superiority, were disposed to treat the Baptists as an inferior class of beings. In two instances, however, they suffered much inconvenience and loss of property, in consequence of the disability Dissenters were laid under to hold church property in a direct manner. The first was in the case of the church in Charleston; who after they had held the lot on which their house of worship and parsonage stood, for fifty years, but had neglected to see that a regular succession of Trustees was kept up to secure the trust, were in the year 1745, by an act of the General Assembly, deprived of their right in one half of said property; which was transferred to the General Baptists, the whole to be held by them in common with the original church, styled

Particular or Calvinistic Baptists. And for the execution of this law, Trustees were appointed by the same authority. This deprivation was suffered by the Chaleston Church, until the year 1787. Since that time, after the Church, had been in full possession of this property for several years, a suit was ordered to be instituted to recover what had been held of it by the General Baptists, as escheated property for the use of the city; but on a hearing of the case by the City Council, in quality of Escheators, and after a full investigation of the arguments and evidence brought before them, they passed an unanimous vote, that the whole of said property did, of right, originally and at present, belong to the Incorporated Baptist Church, in Charleston.

The other instance was in case of the Baptist Church, on Ashley River, whose property, consisting of a beautiful lot on which the house of worship was erected, a valuable parsonage, several negroes, church plate, and several hundred pounds in fund, was seized by an individual and converted into private property.

ANSWER 7th. The Baptists, having greatly increased since the Revolution, are now become numerous in South Carolina. There are at this time five Associations held in the State, which consist with a few exceptions of churches within its bounds. These are, the Charleston, the Bethel, the Broad River, Saluda, and Savannah River Associations. The Charleston Association was formed about the year 1752, and consisted at that time of four or five churches. These were the Charleston, Euhaw, Ashley River, Welsh Neck, and Cashaway Neck Churches. The Euhaw Church was formed of members who removed from Edisto Island, and thus transferred their seat of worship to the main-land. They originated from Charleston. The Ashley River Church was formed directly from the Charleston. The Welsh Neck Church consisted of emigrants from Wales, who had settled first in Pennsylvania. The Cashaway Neck Church also consisted chiefly of the same description of emigrants.

This Association, before the Revolution, had dismissed several churches to form a new Association in North Carolina; since the Revolution, one to the Bethel Association; and, within a few years, several to the Savannah River Association. It now comprehends twenty-seven churches,\* in which there are more than twenty Ministers, and 2418 communicants. Two of the churches are in North Carolina.

The Bethel Association was formed of churches which had belonged to the Congaree Association, and some others which had been gathered after that body had been dissolved. It was formed in the year 1789, and consisted of sixteen churches; within ten years past it has dismissed two bodies of churches to form new Associations; and yet in the year 1806, it contained fifty-five churches, comprehending about four thousand communicants, and forty-five ministers.

\* This hint refers the date of this manuscript to 1807. In October of that year, according to the minutes, the Association stood precisely as here described.—B. M.

The Broad River and Saluda Association originated from the Bethel. Their numbers are not known with exactness ; but from general accounts they are understood to comprehend, taken together, about forty churches, some of which are in North Carolina. The probability is that the churches belonging to them, which lie in this State, contain twenty-five or thirty ministers, and twenty-five hundred communicants, at least.

The Savannah River Association was formed in 1802. It now consists of twenty-five churches, of which sixteen or seventeen are in this State, the rest in Georgia. Those in this State contain sixteen hundred and fifty-two communicants, and ten or twelve ministers. The name of Separate Baptists, and the reason for the distinction, are now done away ; the churches, which were formed on the separate plan, having embraced the confession of faith, and come under the same system of discipline with the churches which were called Regular Baptists.

These Associations (and all the bodies bearing this character among the Baptists with very few, if any exceptions,) are formed on the plan of independency in church government. Their general character is that of a council of advice, claiming no co-ercive power over churches ; yet to support union in purity, they claim a right to inquire into the state of the churches, when regular representations are made that principles or practices exist among them which are inconsistent with christian union ; and to exclude from their union such as obstinately persist in such errors or disorders. Their meetings are held annually, and the churches are represented in them by their pastors, and such other members as they think proper to appoint by special delegation, which is signified in a letter addressed to the Association. Rarely are more than two or three so appointed to act with the Pastor. The Association, when formed, consults the general interests of the churches, answers their queries, takes an account of their present state, and addresses a Pastoral Letter to them. Minutes of these Associations, and the letter, are afterwards published, and sent to the churches.

Soon after the formation of the Charleston Association, contributions began to be made, under the patronage of that body, to assist pious young men in obtaining education for the gospel ministry ; and several were so assisted, particularly Rev. Evan Pugh, A. M., Rev. Dr. Stillman, Rev. Messrs. Edmund Matthews, and Edmund Botsford, A. M., of which number Mr. Botsford alone survives. In the year 1768, a society was formed in Charleston, by members of churches united in the Association, under the character of the Religious Society, whose principal object was the education of ministers ; but to this they united in design two other objects, the collection of a select library, and the discussion of useful subjects in divinity at a weekly meeting : the last of these almost exclusively applied to the members residing in Charleston. This society continued to provide for the education contemplated in its first design, until it was superseded by the establishment of the General Committee.

The General Committee of Baptist Churches united in the Charleston Association, was formed in 1792; and was, soon after its formation, incorporated by an act of the Legislature. Its principal object is the same with that of the Religious Society; but should its funds finally prove sufficient, it is at liberty to apply a part of them to other purposes of general benefit to the cause of religion. Another object of the Committee is to see, that property belonging to the churches shall not be secularized by individuals; for which purpose the Committee are invested by the churches with a power of guardianship over their property, under certain limitations. The General Committee is composed of a delegate from each church in Association, or of those in it who regularly contribute to the Fund. They assemble at the same time and place with the Association, that these bodies may confer together with convenience on subjects of common concern; and the same person may be delegated to represent a church in both. The Committee chooses annually a President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and two\* Assistants. The officers and these Assistants together form a special Committee, and are authorised to meet and transact necessary business during the recess of the General Committee.

For augmenting the Fund, besides any money or property which may be obtained by donations and bequests, yearly collections are made in each church; on which occasion, charity sermons are preached.

None are admitted to the benefit of this Institution, but such persons as come well recommended for good morals and piety, and appear on examination to have good mental endowments, and a conscientious sense of its being their duty to enter on the work of the ministry. The examination is made by the General Committee; but often, at their direction, by the Special Committee. Persons so admitted to obtain education are considered, during the time they pursue their studies, as under the superintendence of the Committee, and more especially of the President. Error in sentiment or immorality in conduct, persisted in, will subject those who have been admitted, to exclusion.

Eleven young men have been employed in a course of studies under the care of the Committee, all of whom except one have obtained some acquaintance with the Latin and Greek languages, and most useful sciences, as well as Divinity. Two of them have obtained collegiate education, and a third has nearly completed his course at college. The one excepted above only studied the English language, some of the sciences, and Divinity; he having a family, though a young man.

The Committee have provided a respectable Library for the use of the students, which is kept by the Rev. Mr. Roberts, A. M., at his Academy near Stateburg. And they have distributed some useful books among poor ministers. The Fund, notwithstanding considerable disbursements, has been augmented to nearly one thousand pounds, besides nearly two

\* The number of Assistants has been increased to four.—B. M.

thousand acres of land, supposed to be worth as many dollars, which were a donation.

In the year 1802, a missionary scheme was formed by the Charleston Association, which has been placed under the direction of the Special Committee; and the Rev. John Rooker was appointed Missionary to the Catawba Indians. It was contemplated at the same time to institute a school among them for the education of their children; but before it could be done, a Missionary from the Presbyterian Synod of the Carolinas, or the General Assembly, undertook the business. It was carried on, in a lax manner, for some time on this plan, and then relinquished. In the beginning of the year 1806, a school was opened under the direction of the Baptist Committee; and a considerable number of the Indian children have been taught to read, a less number to write, and some have learned the use of figures. The Association's Missionary, from his first appointment, has continued to preach among the Catawbas. He has been treated by them with much respect; they have attended on his preaching with seriousness, and have become considerably more enlightened than they were;—but none of them have regularly professed Christianity.

From the whole of what has been stated above, it will appear, that there are in this State about one hundred and thirty Baptist Churches, containing ten thousand five hundred communicants and one hundred ministers. If the adherents are reckoned at six to one, which, including children, is thought to be a moderate calculation, they will altogether amount to seventy-three thousand five hundred.

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The above paper was drawn up by the Rev. Richard Furman, D. D., in his own handwriting, at the request of the late Dr. Ramsay, the historian;—and by his daughter, Miss Catherine Ramsay, presented to the Charleston Library Society. From Mr. Benjamin Elliott, chairman of a Committee of that Society for collecting old manuscripts and materials of history, I have obtained the original, and have made this *exact copy*.

B. MANLY.

CHARLESTON, S. C., August 29, 1833.





